MAN OPENS FIRE AT HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, PG 15

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Relating pg 18

No time left for family feuds

Sunny Side

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- See what other Metro readers are doing and saying about SunnySide
- Today
- Rethink romp for breast cancer, pg 6

New Moon

All this week, Metro Canada is giving you a look behind the scenes of New Moon, the newest film in the TWILIGHT series. TODAY — Kristen Stewart talks about the pressures of playing Bella, pg 42 TOMORROW — Robert Pattinson weighs in on the Twilight phenomenon

Bolt Lightning fast

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt poses for a photograph yesterday in Toronto after winning the 2009 Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award. Bolt is in Toronto to compete in the 100-metre race at the Festival of Excellence, a world-class track and field meet to be held today at the University of Toronto's Varsity Centre. More coverage, page 21.

Sri Lanka boots Rae out

The federal government has expressed "dismay and displeasure" to the Sri Lankan government after Liberal foreign affairs critic Bob Rae was detained and booted out of the country upon arriving at the airport in Colombo.

Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Emma Welford calls it "unacceptable treatment of a Canadian parliamentarian" and says it's absurd to for anyone to suggest the former Ontario premier represented a security threat or is a supporter of the terrorist Tamil Tigers.

Conservative MP Deepak Obhrai, parliamentary secretary to Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon, says he was also supposed to go to Sri Lanka this week. But his application for a visa was denied by the Sri Lankan High Commission in Ottawa.

Unlike Obhrai, Rae had successfully applied for a visa and had discussed his trip beforehand with Sri Lankan officials.

Immigration Commissioner P.B. Abeykoon said the former Ontario premier was briefly detained at the international airport when he arrived in the country, which has been torn apart by civil war.

He said Sri Lanka's intelligence services deemed Rae's visit "not suitable" and Rae was forced to leave on another flight.

Rae had called on Canada to be more outspoken in its criticism of Sri Lanka's recent offensive against the rebels that left thousands of civilians dead.

His criticism became more vocal in the final weeks of the war, during which more than 7,000 civilians were killed, according to the United Nations.

Rae had called for the government to re-engage in Sri Lanka to help the Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan government forces negotiate a peaceful end to the conflict.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Buy American' forcing Canucks to go south

PROTECTIONISM Hayward Gordon Ltd. may be based in Toronto, but the industrial pump maker is being forced to shift work to facilities south of the border, joining a number of Canadian companies anxious they'll lose customers as U.S. trade restrictions known as the "Buy America" policy kick in.

"I have no choice," John Hayward said in an interview yesterday, confirming plans to shuffle some work to a facility in Pennsylvania.

> **"I have no choice ... we do that or we go out of business."** John Hayward

"Either we do that or we go out of business with that part of our market."

Hayward, which also has operations in Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, is just one of many companies faced with the prospect of losing a significant amount of business as U.S. purchasers increasingly follow Buy America's directive to buy homemade goods. Earlier this year, U.S. President Barack Obama signed an economic stimulus law that limits steel and manufactured goods under the plan to be purchased only within U.S. borders.

In response, more Canadian companies are considering setting up shop south of the border to save their business. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 12

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Gun seized from man with lifetime weapons ban
A 38-calibre revolver was seized yesterday from the car of a Mississauga man who has two lifetime gun bans. The 27-year-old had three separate court orders at the time of his arrest. Benjamin Brefo will appear in court today. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local

Toronto man arrested in Internet sting

A Toronto man has been arrested after allegedly exposing himself over the Internet to an undercover officer in the U.S. The 28-year-old began communicating with the officer, who he believed to be a 13 or 14 year-old girl, in October of last year. Kevin Jarvis has been charged with three counts of failing to comply with probation, two counts of luring a child under 16, attempt invitation to sexual touching and attempt exposure to a person under 16.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Tomorrow's Metro

Music

Alan Cross is back sharing his encyclopedic music knowledge in Sound Check.

metronews.ca

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Lisa Raitt delivers an emotional apology over 'sexy' cancer comment at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 9, 27, 28, 40, 45 & 48. Bonus 24.
Ontario 49: 4, 8, 14, 17, 33 & 49. Bonus 15.
Ontario Pick 3: 1 5 3; **Ontario Pick 4** : 2 6 5 6
Encore: 5502892
Daily Keno: 1, 2, 3, 8, 14, 15, 17, 24, 27, 34, 37, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 52, 63, 70.
These results are not official.

First smoking in car with kids fine laid

CRIME A Vaughan woman is believed to be the first person charged in Greater Toronto under a new provincial law that bans people from smoking in cars carrying children younger than 16.

The 38-year-old woman, who was driving a car that had three children as passengers, was pulled over on Dufferin Street at about 4 p.m. Monday.

The kids were all younger than 11, said Const. Marina Orlovski of York Region police.

It wasn't clear yesterday how much she was fined, though under the new law, which came into effect in January, offenders can be fined up to $250.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

SHOOTING One man is in hospital and another is under arrest after a shooting on a streetcar in the city's east end late Tuesday evening. Around 10 p.m., the man was shot in the calf on the car at Main Street subway station. The victim has been taken to hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries. The suspect has not been named or charged. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Teacher Tina Grandy sits outside a classroom with student Jonathan Forrester, 18, of T.l. Kennedy Secondary School working on literacy drills yesterday. The school has shown one of the greatest improvements in the province with literacy since the program's inception in 2002.

Reading rubbing off

GTA recording better results on literacy test

Tina Grandy teaches to the test — Ontario's Grade 10 literacy test.

So do her colleagues at Mississauga's T.L. Kennedy Secondary School, where the latest student scores, released yesterday, are almost 40 points higher than when the province launched the compulsory test, now over seven years ago.

They say the test is based on the Ontario curriculum, so teaching the test is simply teaching the curriculum.

"We teach the skills required on the test, which are also in the curriculum," said Grandy, whose school saw 83 per cent of students pass this year, up from 44 per cent in 2002, despite being in a poor and highly transient immigrant neighbourhood.

Across the province, the pass rate this year was 85 per cent, with GTA school boards up typically two to three points, particularly in Halton and York regions, where nine out of 10 students passed the test.

In the Toronto District School Board, 82 per cent of students passed, up from 80 per cent last year. Toronto's Catholic board saw 84 per cent of students pass, up from 81 per cent the year before.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A three-year-old managed to leave his home, walk through the yard's gate before being struck by a car yesterday.

Driver fails to stop after hitting child

ACCIDENT Neighbours are stumped as to how a well-cared-for Mississauga toddler could wander out of his house in the middle of the night before being struck by a passing car that kept on going.

Just before 1 a.m. yesterday morning the three-year-old left his townhouse and wandered through an open gate. The boy was hit on Britannia Road just west of Glen Erin.

The car did not stop, but with the help of witnesses the driver was found a short distance away, police said. A 48-year-old Mississauga man was arrested.

The boy is in critical condition at hospital.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Missing a xylophone?

Hamilton police are looking for the owner of a stolen xylophone that they have recovered after busting four men, who allegedly took part in a spree of trailer thefts. Anyone who has had a xylophone stolen from them in the last six months is asked to contact Hamilton police. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Machine out of order

TDSB votes down aspartame-only pop in schools

The good news: Toronto students won't be limited to aspartame-sweetened diet pop.

The bad news: they won't be able to buy anything — including water and juice — if a recommendation to ban vending machines from all schools by September is approved.

Toronto District School Board Trustees voted yesterday to not extend the current contract with Pepsi Co., slated to expire on Aug. 31, citing concerns that the soft-drink company will offer only-aspartame sweetened pop in high schools starting next year.

If the committee recommendation is approved by the board, vending machines in all, including elementary schools which only sell water, juice and milk, will be gone by the end of the summer.

The decision passed without much debate at the TDSB office in North York.

"I don't think as an educational body, we should not be promoting any items that do not contribute to the well-being young people," said Ward 17 trustee Michael Couteau, after citing a number of studies researching the potential long term side-effects of aspartame.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Aspartame

- The switch to aspartame is being introduced by Refreshments Canada, an industry-sponsored organization that includes Pepsi and Coca-Cola, as part of the Guidelines for School Partnerships to give students healthier beverage choices.

TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto police updated the public yesterday on the shooting investigation of Dylan Ellis, left, and Oliver Martin last year. They have shown, for the first time, a photo taken from the back seat three minutes before the shooting. The photo was taken by Martin's girlfriend who was sitting in the back seat at the time and was uninjured in the shooting.

One year later — still no leads

CRIME A photo of two young Toronto men taken just minutes before they were shot to death almost a year ago was released yesterday in the hopes of spurring new leads in a case that has a "completely unclear" motive.

Dylan Ellis and Oliver Martin, both 25, were shot and killed in a sport utility vehicle after they pulled up outside a friend's condo on June 13 in downtown Toronto. Detectives handed out the photo after debating its release for some time, said Toronto Police Det.-Sgt. Gary Giroux.

"We are hoping someone will see this — two best friends in the prime of their lives — and it will trigger something, that someone will see this and come forward."

In the picture, Ellis and Martin are facing each other laughing. Martin's girlfriend took the photo from the back seat of the vehicle they were sitting in.

A short time later, a man approached the driver's side of the vehicle and fired three shots, fatally striking the men in their chests. Police believe the gunman may not have realized Martin's girlfriend was crouched in the back seat.

Over the past year, police said no witnesses have come forward to suggest the pair had been involved in a high-risk lifestyle.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Theories on why

- While police still have no leads and no suspects in the case, one theory is that the shooter may have been on a bike and may have been motivated by some form of road rage.
- There has also been speculation their deaths were a case of mistaken identity.

EHealth fallout could spur reform: Premier

POLITICS Premier Dalton McGuinty says his government should have had more oversight in place at eHealth Ontario, which is mired in a spending scandal over untendered contracts.

McGuinty's also hinting he will force all agencies to comply with the same strict rules that government employees must follow in dealing with the private sector.

He says the changes may come after Auditor General Jim McCarter completes his report on eHealth, which is expected in the fall.

The premier also acknowledged the eHealth controversy is taking its toll and compromising government efforts to sell policies like tax harmonization to voters.

Premier Dalton McGuinty

EHealth, which is tasked with creating electronic health records in Ontario, has come under fire for questionable spending and awarding nearly $5 million in untendered contracts.

Opposition parties have accused both former CEO Sarah Kramer and board chairman Dr. Alan Hudson of giving Liberal-friendly firms lucrative contracts without taking competitive bids.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

PIPE BOMB Prisoners were evacuated from a Scarborough police station after officers unintentionally brought in what appeared to be a pipe bomb in a bag of stolen goods. Toronto Fire, a bomb squad and the Emergency Task Force were called to the east Scarborough station. After hours of testing, including an X-ray that told police it was likely a dud, ETF officers shattered the pipe. It was empty.

MARIJUANA Over 1,400 marijuana plants, totalling $1.4 million, were seized from a family grow-op in Glanbrook Ont. yesterday. Police have charged a father, his son and his daughter in conjunction with this grow operation after raiding two farm homes in Glanbrook, which is a rural community that is southeast from Hamilton. Police also seized a $40,000 farm tractor, $2,400 worth of stolen truck tires, and over 4,000 rounds of ammunition.

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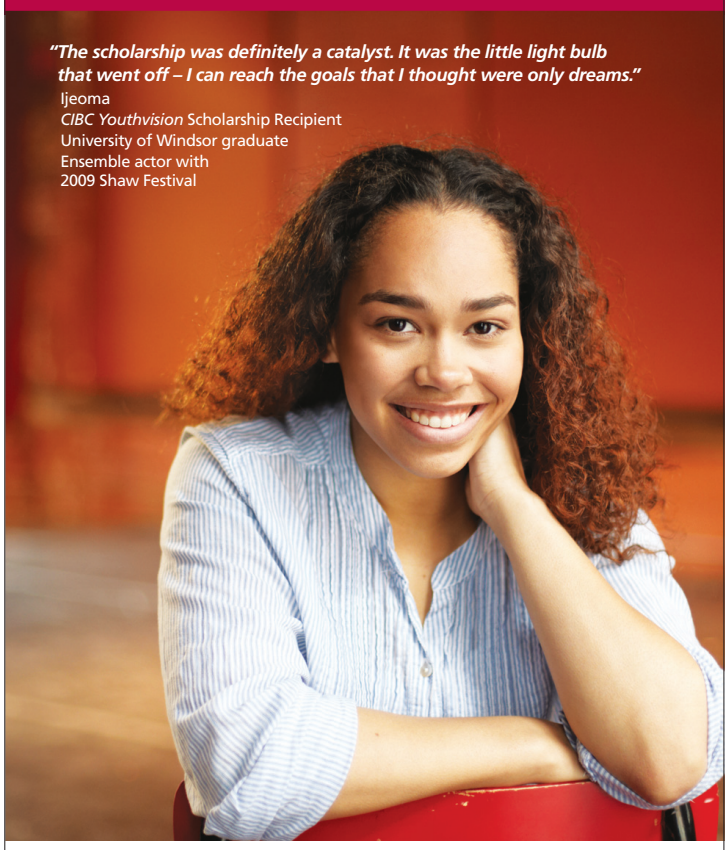

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Towing incident leaves one teen critical, one teen charged

A 16-year-old boy from Burlington is in hospital in critical condition after being towed behind a car. The car's driver, a 17-year-old boy, has been charged. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SUBMITTED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Chrysler Group LLC CEO Sergio Marchionne , left, celebrates a landmark day in Chrysler's history and greets employees at the company's headquarters in Michigan yesterday. Earlier in the day, Chrysler and Fiat finalized their previously announced alliance.

Chrysler could be up and running June 29

The Grand Caravans, 300s and Chargers could be rolling off the assembly lines at Chrysler Canada assembly plants here within three weeks following a two-month shutdown as the company's parent pulls away from bankruptcy court protection with a new partner.

Although Chrysler would not confirm dates, the Canadian Auto Workers union said yesterday company officials have suggested privately to them they want to reopen the minivan plant in Windsor, a big car operation in Brampton and an engine casting factory in suburban Etobicoke by June 29.

"There's no official notification yet, but we are optimistic the plants will be up and running by the end of the month," said Jerry Dias, a senior CAW senior official.

"The company hopes to start by then."

About 8,700 production and skilled workers at Chrysler Canada Inc.'s operations here have been off the job since the end of April, when the parent company gained temporary court protection from creditors in the United States.

> **"There's no official notification yet, but we are optimistic the plants will be ... running by the end of the month."**
> Jerry Dias, CAW

Thousands of other workers at scores of parts makers that supply the assembly plants have also remained idled.

Chrysler had wanted to build autos during a 30- to 60-day bankruptcy period, but the uncertainty over the process and payments prompted some edgy suppliers to stop deliveries. It disrupted operations here and in the U.S., where about 27,000 other workers are also on layoff.

Chrysler spokespersons said yesterday they had no information on specific reopening dates at individual plants.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 19

Event helps young people rethink breast cancer

HEATHER BUCHAN
for Metro Toronto

Sunny Side

One year ago, Karyn Stowe decided to leave her kids at home and get dressed up for a night out with girlfriends. It ultimately saved her life.

Stowe, a 38-year-old mother of three attended a sassy fundraising party, called Hello! Sailor, with 600 other revellers, the proceeds of which went to Rethink Breast Cancer — a charity founded in 2001 by MJ DeCoteau to educate and support young people affected by breast cancer.

The next day, she decided to do a breast self-examination and found a lump.

It turned out to be cancerous and Stowe underwent a mastectomy. In a roundabout way, she has DeCoteau to thank.

Essentially, DeCoteau wanted to put breast cancer on the radar of young women in a fun way without scaring them.

This year's fundraiser, called Prohibition, Glamour Goes Underground is certain to be another hit.

Rethink Romp

- Tickets for the Rethink Romp are $65, with all proceeds going to Rethink Breast Cancer. www.rethinkromp09.com.

News in brief

WATER Leaky pipes cause a lot of water to be wasted at huge cost to consumers, contractors say. As much as one-quarter of Ontario's treated drinking water — enough to fill 50,000 Olympic-size pools — leaks out of pipes before ever reaching a tap. That's costing water users at least $700 million annually, says an engineer who studied the issue for the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. And Toronto's record is no better than the provincial average, said University of Toronto civil engineering professor Tamer El-Diraby. Toronto Mayor David Miller, who has come under fire from opposition councillors for requesting only federal funding for new streetcars instead of a slew of projects including sewer and watermain repairs, defended the decision to forgo money for watermains.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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416-441-3710 ext.223

Arrest made in Mississauga stabbing death
One man is dead and another has been arrested after a stabbing at a house near Mavis Road and Eglinton Avenue West in Mississauga yesterday morning. Salik Bin Sajid, 23, will appear in court tomorrow, where he is expected to be charged with first-degree murder. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Irregular heartbeat hikes risk of stroke

An estimated quarter of a million Canadians have a type of irregular heartbeat that dramatically increases their risk of having a potentially fatal stroke — but many are not getting the treatment they need, says the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

The foundation says people with atrial fibrillation are five times more likely to have a stroke and twice as likely to die from it.

Yet many of these patients are unaware of their risk and are not receiving blood-thinning medications that significantly reduce the risk of stroke, says Dr. Marco Di Buono, director of research for Heart and Stroke Ontario.

"This is particularly worrisome because living with the effects of stroke for someone with atrial fibrillation is more severe than living with the effects of stroke for someone who doesn't have underlying atrial fibrillation," Di Buono said.

Patients with the heart rhythm disorder are in hospital longer after a stroke and are often left with more severe physical and cognitive disabilities, he explained.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Risk increases with age

• While rare in people younger than 40, the risk of developing atrial fibrillation increases with age. After 55, its incidence doubles with each decade of life and with such risk factors as high blood pressure, diabetes and underlying heart disease.

Ontario's adoption records are now open.

visit www.ontario.ca/adoptioninfo

Effective June 1, 2009, Ontario's adoption records are open. This means that adopted adults and birth parents can apply for post-adoption birth information from birth records and adoption orders.

An adopted adult, 18 years of age or older, can now apply for a copy of his or her original birth registration and adoption order. A birth parent can receive information from the birth registration and adoption order of the child that was placed for adoption once that child turns 19 years old.

If you want your identifying information kept private, and if the adoption order was made before September 1, 2008, adopted adults and birth parents can file a disclosure veto.

To learn more about your right to information and privacy regarding adoption,
visit www.ontario.ca/adoptioninfo or call 1-800-461-2156 (TTY 416-325-3408).

Paid for by the Government of Ontario.

Ontario

Almost 500 new cases of flu reported

Flu **Outbreak**

HEALTH An additional 484 cases of influenza A (H1N1), also known as swine flu, have been confirmed in Ontario since Friday.

Dr. David Williams, Ontario's acting chief medical officer of health, says the total number of cases reported in the province is now up to 1,562.

As of Tuesday, 10 people were in Ontario hospitals being treated for the illness.

A statement from the province says a number of those people have underlying medical conditions.

So far, two people in Ontario have died after contracting the swine flu but both had chronic medical conditions.

THE CANADIAN PRESS
MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 17

Doc, patient link under scrutiny

COURT A lawyer's claim that allowing medical investigators to watch three general practitioners perform cosmetic surgeries in their offices could jeopardize the confidentiality of the doctor-patient relationship was challenged yesterday by two judges of the Ontario Court of Appeal.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has concerns the procedures routinely performed by the doctors — everything from liposuction to breast "lofts" (rejuvenation) — may not be safe given the physicians have no formal qualifications in surgery, the court heard yesterday.

One patient died in 2006 after undergoing an abdominal panniculectomy at the Toronto clinic of Dr. Eli Judah. The procedure — the removal of hanging fat and skin — involved a 64-centimetre abdominal incision.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

STOP HAIR LOSS

BIO-FEN PLUS™ is a natural health product used in the treatment of hereditary androgenic alopecia *(AGA)* in adults ***(male or female pattern baldness.)*** It contains scientifically calculated proportions of extracts of fenugreek seeds, saw palmetto berries and flax lignans. Each are known to possess an inhibitor of the enzyme responsible for causing male or female pattern baldness. It also contains a mixture of B vitamins, folate and biotin to help metabolize these herbal extracts so that they are more bio-available, and to support the growth of strong and healthy hair.

What causes hereditary hair loss?

Each hair grows from a pocket in the skin called the hair follicle. During its growing phase, the follicle has a bulb-shaped bottom, the center of which is called the dermal papilla. The papilla is fed by very small blood vessels, which bring it food & oxygen and remove wastes. The papilla is highly sensitive to hormones and chemicals secreted by the body *(or ingested as a medicine)* which impacts hair growth.

It is believed that some individuals have a genetic predisposition to a receding hairline *(most common in men)* or hair/follicle thinning over larger areas of scalp *(more common in women)*. These conditions result from hormonal changes caused by an enzyme in the dermal papilla called 5-alpha-reductase. This enzyme breaks down the hormone testosterone into dihydrotestosterone *(DHT)*.

Over a period of time, an over abundance of DHT causes the hair follicle to degrade and shortens the active phase of the hair, eventually leading to thinner hair and eventual hair loss.

How does BIO-FEN PLUS™ *work?*

Specific compounds within the herbal extracts inhibit the 5-alpha-reductase *(and therefore reduce DHT)* to prevent or slow down the rate of hair loss. This process is the principle by which the prescription drugs such as Propecia *(finasteride)* work. However, BIO-FEN PLUS™ also contains additional compounds which remove excess cholesterol and testosterone – the building blocks of DHT.

BIO-FEN PLUS™ also contains vitamins to increase blood flow to the small capillaries that feed the hair roots, to deliver the active herbal compounds and remove waste. **Therefore, BIO-FEN PLUS™ provides a natural, safer alternative to expensive drugs, and/or expensive & painful hair transplants.** As with the prescription alternatives, results vary from person to person, and no one product will work for everyone.

How long must I use BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

BIO-FEN PLUS™ capsules are usually effective at stopping hair loss within the first two months. However, since healthy hair grows only about 1 cm each month, it may take up to three months before you notice that hair growth is increased or further hair loss is stopped.

Anyone experiencing new growth will see it within four to six months. Once results become apparent, some users are able to reduce their BIO-FEN PLUS™ supplement dose to one capsule every second or every third day. Some clients will continue to take BIO-FEN PLUS™ daily. Once you stop completely, however, your hair growth pattern will slowly go back to the point where you started.

How safe is BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

The ingredient combination in BIO-FEN PLUS™ is generally safe for most adults. However, the following cautions are advised:

Folic acid: Consult a health care practitioner if you are uncertain whether or not you are taking adequate vitamin B12, as folate supplementation can mask a Vitamin B12 deficiency.

Vitamin B3: Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you have impaired liver function.

Vitamin B6: Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you are taking levodopa.

What is the quality of BIO-FEN PLUS™ *?*

BIO-FEN PLUS™ is manufactured in Canada according to a quality assurance program called Good Manufacturing Practices *(GMP)*. This ensures that the ingredients are tested for their level of quality, potency & purity, prior to production and again prior to sale.

See our website to locate your nearest Health Food Store or Pharmacy that offers BIO-FEN PLUS™ and other quality products from Hair Grow Technology. If you have any questions or comments about our products that target hair loss and support the growth of strong, healthy hair, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Each BIO-FEN PLUS™ *capsule contains (mg/capsule):*

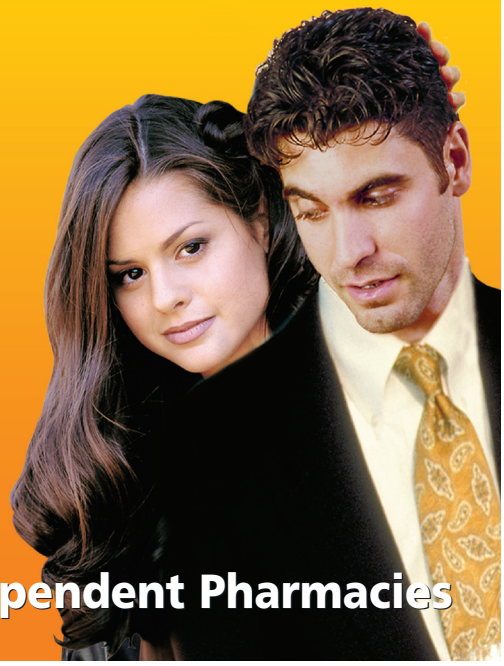
Fenugreek *(Trigonella feonum graecum)* seed extract 4:1	260 mg
Saw palmetto berry extract contains 45% powder, esters & sterols	160 mg
Flax lignans, standardized to 20% secoisolariciresinol diglucoside *(SDG)*	100 mg
D-calcium pantothenate *(Vitamin B5)*	10.40 mg
Niacinamide *(Vitamin B3)*	10.25 mg
Pyridoxine HCl *(Vitamin B6)*	2.00 mg
Riboflavin *(Vitamin B2)*	1.58 mg
Folic acid	0.095 mg
Biotin	400 mcg

Non-medicinal ingredients: inert microcrystalline cellulose and vegetable-based magnesium stearate in a veggie-based capsule.

Recommended adult dose: one capsule per day

BIO-FEN PLUS

www.biofen.com



Available at Health Food stores and Independent Pharmacies

Police taking new look at train death as homicide
Police in Brantford, Ont., have reopened a decade-old train fatality as a homicide. Aaron Reid, 17, died on Oct. 16, 1999, after being hit by a train. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Progress report due

Ottawa to outline how stimulus is being spent

Prime Minister Stephen Harper will outline his government's second economic progress report today on how it's handling the recession.

Quarterly report cards were demanded by the Liberals as a condition for supporting the Jan. 27 federal budget and not trying to bring down the minority Conservative government.

But Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff has warned he could still seek to topple the minority government and force a summer vote if the Tories haven't done well enough in rolling out $22.7 billion of stimulus money.

Sources said the report card, prepared for Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, will contain no new announcement, but will point to improving economic prospects for the country.

It will also contain specifics on how much of the stimulus has been allocated and spent.

Harper will discuss the report during an event in Cambridge, Ont.

The update is expected to cite the analysis issued by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development this week, which cited Canada among four industrialized countries showing signs of having reached a bottom in their decline.

The Liberals would need the support of the NDP and the Bloc Québécois to force an election.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty leaves the Conservative Caucus meeting on Parliament Hill in Ottawa yesterday. The Conservatives will outline their second economic progress report today.

Tory support down in key 905 area

POLITICS A new poll suggests that Conservative support has been eroding in a vital Ontario battleground targeted by all three federalist parties.

The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey indicates the lead the Conservatives enjoyed in the 905 area code of southern Ontario during the last campaign has vanished and the Liberals enjoy a substantial advance in the region.

The Conservatives, the Liberals and the NDP have focused the majority of their resources on a handful of truly competitive ridings across the country. The 905 horseshoe of ridings stretching down to Niagara Falls are among the most hotly contested.

50 The percentage of poll respondents who back the Liberals in the 905 region.

On a national basis, voter intentions give the Liberals 35 per cent, the Conservatives 31, the NDP 15, the Bloc nine and the Greens eight.

Across Ontario the Liberals lead the Conservatives 42-31. The NDP has 14 per cent and the Greens have 11 per cent.

In the 905 region, the Liberal lead is 50-27, with the NDP at 11 per cent. Before the last election, the Tories led 44-32 here.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

QUEBEC Parti Québécois Leader Pauline Marois says she is not looking to provoke political crises but doesn't deny they could help achieve independence. Suggestions by Jacques Parizeau that such crises could aid Quebec sovereignty prompted Premier Jean Charest to urge Marois yesterday to distance herself from the former PQ boss.

ISOTOPES Canada will get out of the medical isotopes business, according to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Harper says he plans to keep the Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.'s aging facility in Chalk River, Ont., running as often as possible, while working with other countries and provinces to develop alternative sources of treatment.

OILSANDS Syncrude Canada may use a constitutional challenge to fight environmental charges laid after roughly 1,600 ducks died last year in the toxic sludge of a lake-sized oilsands tailings pond in northern Alberta. The company has not entered a plea and the case has been adjourned until mid-September.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Native reconciliation commission costs $3 million
A revamped reconciliation forum on native residential schools has cost about $3 million — and it hasn't started yet. The Harper government is set to relaunch the flawed Truth and Reconciliation Commission with a new three-member panel. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Natural Resources Minister Lisa Raitt pauses yesterday as she reads a statement during a brief media conference in Ottawa.

Raitt says she's sorry

MP recounts family's cancer history

Lisa Raitt has finally said sorry.

The embattled natural resources minister offered a belated and emotional apology yesterday for describing the shortage of isotopes used in cancer tests as a "sexy" issue from which she could benefit politically.

"Today, I want to personally convey my deep regret for wording I used in a private discussion earlier this year, which was inadvertently recorded," Raitt told a hastily arranged news conference.

"As somebody who has been, in their personal life, deeply affected by cancer, my intent was certainly not to show any disrespect for cancer victims, survivors or their families.

"I want to offer a clear apology to anyone who has been offended by what I said."

Raitt choked up as she described watching her father die of colon cancer when she was a child, and then losing her brother to lung cancer as an adult.

She left without taking any questions.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper dismissed calls for Raitt's resignation and ignored repeated demands for an apology. Instead, he accused the opposition of "playing cheap politics."

It's not clear what changed overnight, other than growing public outrage.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Raitt and wrong

- Lisa Raitt refused to apologize Tuesday despite heavy criticism from the opposition and the public. Outraged cancer survivors and their supporters demanded Raitt resign — or at least apologize — for remarks they considered to be insensitive and calculating.

Canadians pay more for health care: Report

HEALTH An industry watchdog suggests Canadians' out-of-pocket health-care expenses have increased at least sevenfold since 1981.

The Health Council of Canada, created by first ministers to monitor and report on the progress of health-care renewal, says private, out-of-pocket health spending has almost doubled as a share of disposable income.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

$16.5B

What Canadians paid out of their own pockets for health care in 2007, up from $2.3 billion in 1981, according to a study by the Roy Romanow-led Institute of Well-Being.

Aid will do little, fishermen say

INDUSTRY Lobster fishermen in Atlantic Canada said a multimillion-dollar aid package announced yesterday will do little to help an industry hit by rock-bottom prices, a collapse in demand and a future they say is uncertain.

Several people in the struggling fishery criticized the funding arrangement, saying the $65 million is a pittance for a problem that requires hundreds of millions of dollars in support.

Short-term aid

- Gail Shea said $15 million will go toward short-term transitional aid for harvesters hit hardest by demand that has fallen off sharply because of the global recession.

"Well, $65 million over a five-year period in five provinces really doesn't do much," Bill Broderick of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers union said from a federal office in St. John's, N.L., that he had been occupying with about 25 other union members until yesterday afternoon.

"It's hardly a recognition of the seriousness of this problem. It's a Band-Aid."

Federal Fisheries Minister Gail Shea announced the measures in P.E.I., where fishers have tied their boats because of prices that have dropped to levels of $3 a pound.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PM pushes for more free trade

POLITICS Prime Minister Stephen Harper is urging Parliament to pass a newly signed free-trade agreement with Colombia to send a clear and "powerful message" to the world against protectionism.

Appearing on Parliament Hill with Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, Harper said yesterday that protectionism is a threat to the global economy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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the Bay

Medical marijuana user convicted on pot charges
A Quebec man with a medicinal marijuana permit has been convicted on pot-related charges stemming from 2007. THE CANADIAN PRESS

United to save trade

Ottawa, provinces join forces against 'Buy American'

Canada's efforts to combat Buy American provisions is fostering unprecedented co-operation between the provinces and Ottawa, International Trade Minister Stockwell Day said yesterday.

The two levels of government are actively working on a written agreement among themselves that they would present to the United States in an effort to extend free trade to provincial, state and municipal levels, he said, a day after he conducted a conference call with his provincial counterparts.

800 An estimated $800 billion US in stimulus spending could potentially come under Buy America restrictions, cutting off many Canadian firms from a lucrative market.

"That would be one of a number of levers that we'll use with the U.S. to convince them that we have to move past these protectionist measures that are manifesting themselves," Day said at a news conference after addressing the Economic Forum of the Americas in Montreal.

Several of Canada's consuls general descended on Capitol Hill Monday in Washington, D.C., to increase lobbying of American politicians in an effort to persuade them of the harmful side-effects of protectionist trade barriers in the "Buy American" plan.

Ottawa is trying to secure a Canadian exclusion clause from the legislation, using the argument that the two countries' industries are so integrated that any form of discrimination rebounds on both countries. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tories detail new climate plan

POLICY The Harper government took the long-awaited step yesterday of detailing its plan to trade pollution permits on the open market.

Environment Minister Jim Prentice released two draft documents laying the ground rules for a federal carbon-offset scheme.

The guidelines set out which offset projects qualify for the federal system, how others can apply for inclusion, the value of each offset credit, how emissions cuts are tracked and verified, and other nitty-gritty details of the plan.

"The offset system, like all elements of our climate-change plan, is aimed first and foremost at reducing emissions in Canada," Prentice said.

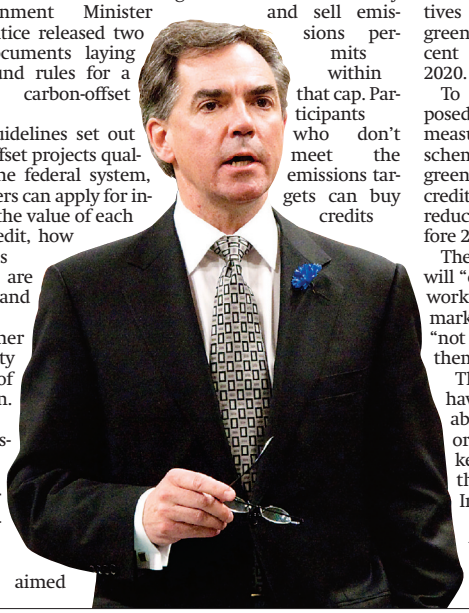
The government will place a cap on greenhouse gases and allow firms to buy and sell emissions permits within that cap. Participants who don't meet the emissions targets can buy credits from those with a surplus instead of reducing their emissions.

The idea is to gradually lower the ceiling to control emissions. The Conservatives pledged to lower greenhouse gases 20 per cent from 2006 levels by 2020.

To do that, they've proposed a tangle of regulatory measures, a cap-and-trade scheme, investments in green-technology funds and credits for companies that reduced their emissions before 2006.

The federal offset system will "complement" a patchwork of regional carbon markets, Prentice said, and "not supplant or duplicate them."

The regional schemes have popped up in the absence of a continental or national carbon market. The most notable is the Western Climate Initiative. THE CANADIAN PRESS


Environment Minister Jim Prentice

London kids' remains moved to Toronto for investigation

CRIME Police probing the discovery of the decomposed remains of three infants are hoping one of North America's leading forensic facilities can help unravel the mystery surrounding the case, but warned yesterday it could be weeks before more is known about how the babies died.

The remains were moved to Toronto for autopsies at the Centre of Forensic Sciences, scheduled to begin today, but London police Det.-Supt. Ken Heslop said he may not have results for some time.

Kids
- Neighbours of Sinn said they had never seen a child younger than two.

The ages, genders and causes of death remain unknown. They were so badly decomposed that police initially believed they were dealing with only one child.

The deaths may have occurred years ago, police have said.

Jennifer Sinn, 32, who police said was a former resident of the home, is charged with three counts of concealing the body of a child. THE CANADIAN PRESS

RCMP to probe lost mint gold

INVESTIGATION Something as banal as a possible programming glitch in a new computer system could explain how the Royal Canadian Mint lost track of gold stockpiles, the institution's chairman said yesterday.

Mint officials are asking whether any of the programming "which tracks all this stuff was out of whack," James Love said.

The mint has asked the RCMP to help account for the mystery metals after being told by the government to call in the Mounties.

The investigation is expected to take several weeks. THE CANADIAN PRESS

30 days for abductor
A British Columbia man who pleaded guilty to abducting a seven-year-old girl in Hinton, Alta., and groping female customers at two department stores has been sentenced to 30 days in jail. But a judge ordered he be released because of time already served. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Marigolds **Main Street garden**

NOEL CHENIER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Colby Bamber, right, hands a marigold to Bailey Gray yesterday as they joined hundreds of schoolchildren to plant thousands of marigolds along the median of Main Street during the 12th annual Marigolds on Main Street event in Saint John, N.B.

Mulroney's word 'cannot be accepted'

Brian Mulroney's explanation of his financial dealings with businessman Karlheinz Schreiber is filled with "inconsistencies and half-truths" and can't be believed, the head of a public inquiry was told yesterday.

Richard Auger, the lawyer for Schreiber, used his closing arguments before Justice Jeffrey Oliphant to mount a frontal attack on the credibility of the former Conservative prime minister, contending his testimony on major points has been unsupported by documentation or independent witnesses.

"For the most part we are left with Mr. Mulroney's word on the key issues in this inquiry," said Auger. "Mr. Mulroney's word alone cannot be accepted … Mr. Mulroney's story lacks everyday common sense."

> **"Mr. Mulroney's story lacks everyday common sense."**
> Richard Auger, lawyer

Mulroney has acknowledged taking $225,000 from Schreiber to promote the Bear Head project after he stepped down as prime minister in 1993. He says he lobbied senior politicians in China, Russia and France with a view to lining up their support for the purchase of Thyssen vehicles by the UN for peacekeeping work.

Schreiber claims the total was $300,000 and insists he wanted Mulroney to concentrate his lobbying on the Canadian government, something that could have put him in breach of federal ethics rules.

Auger, for his part, directed Oliphant's attention to the fact that Mulroney made no mention of his dealings with Schreiber during testimony he gave under oath in a Montreal courtroom in 1996. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Crown checking up on potential jurors?

Ontario's privacy czar launched a probe yesterday into secret background checks on potential jurors, which critics say could jeopardize court cases across the province.

The investigation will focus on whether privacy rights were violated when police used confidential databases to probe the background of would-be jurors for Crown prosecutors, said Information and Privacy Commissioner Ann Cavoukian.

The probe is also necessary because the practice seems to be more widespread than the government had first indicated, she added.

"Initially, the attorney general advised that this practice was restricted to one courthouse in Simcoe County," Cavoukian said in a release.

"Since then, we have learned that the practice extends to at least one other courthouse, and possibly others. As a result, we will be conducting our own investigation into this matter."

The investigation will try to gauge how far the practice has spread, as well as examine what kind of personal information was collected, why it was gathered, who saw it, and whether the information was adequately protected. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Canadian to blast off Saturday

SPACE When Canadian astronaut Julie Payette arrives at the International Space Station Monday, it will be a lot bigger, busier and more crowded than her last visit 10 years ago.

Julie Payette

Since that trip, when Payette became the first Canadian to visit the station, the space laboratory has grown to the size of two football fields.

The mother of two boys is scheduled to blast off Saturday morning from Florida aboard the U.S. Space Shuttle Endeavour with six crew mates.

Payette, 45, will be a shuttle flight engineer for the first time and will have "the best seat in the house" as part of the cockpit crew.

"It's very rare for a non-U.S. person to have that position," she said.

But it may be the last time a Canadian flies on an American shuttle because the orbiters are tentatively due to be retired in October 2010.

After a two-day voyage to the station, Payette and her colleagues will link up with fellow Canadian astronaut Bob Thirsk and five other crew. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

SUMMONS Alberta Justice hasn't been able to find a Chinese company charged in the deaths of two foreign workers at an oilsands project. Chinese-government-owned Sinopec Shanghai Engineering Company Ltd. failed to appear in Fort McMurray court Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Italy to reopen embassy in Somalia

Officials say Italy is planning to reopen its embassy in violence-stricken Somalia. The Foreign Ministry said yesterday the gesture was meant to support the Somali government. Italy closed its embassy there a decade ago. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Elephant evacuation halted

A court in Malawi has stopped the evacuation of more than 60 elephants from an area where they were getting into deadly battles with farmers. Christina Pretorius of the International Fund for Animal Welfare said the order came after residents said it would make more sense to create a local park for the elephants. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UN ready to impose sanctions

NORTH KOREA Western powers joined with North Korea's allies — China and Russia — yesterday on a proposal that would impose tough new sanctions against the reclusive nation for its second nuclear test. The sanctions would allow foreign countries to search ships heading to and from North Korea, pending approval from the country whose flag the vessel is flying. The resolution does not authorize use of force should ships refuse. On Monday, Pyongyang's main newspaper said the country will consider sanctions a declaration of war and will respond to it with "corresponding self-defence." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Threat?

- On Tuesday, North Korea said it would use nuclear weapons in a "merciless offensive" if provoked.

Russia makes claim

Russia will rebuild its Soviet-era network of polar stations and use its icebreaker fleet to help support its claim to the vast resources of the Arctic, the man who led a mission to plant a Russian flag on the Arctic seabed said yesterday.

Artur Chilingarov, a famed polar scientist who was recently appointed the Kremlin's point man for Arctic issues, said Russia will gather data and resubmit its claim to the UN that an underwater mountain range crossing the polar region is part of Russia's continental shelf. Under a UN treaty, Russia would have ownership of any of its natural resources.

Russia's fleet of six nuclear-powered icebreakers give it an edge in exploration, Chilingarov said, because they are more powerful than ships from other Arctic nations. "Russia has a powerful atomic icebreaker fleet, which can ... fulfil any task," he added. "No other Arctic nation has such potential." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crowded Arctic

- Russia, Canada, the U.S., Denmark and Norway have all been trying to assert jurisdiction over parts of the Arctic, which is believed to contain as much as 25 per cent of the Earth's undiscovered oil and gas.

Russia willing to abandon nukes: Putin

RUSSIA Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said yesterday that Russia is willing to abandon nuclear weapons, if the U.S. and all other countries that have them do the same.

"If those who made the atomic bomb and used it are ready to abandon it — like, I hope, other nuclear powers officially and unofficially owning them — of course we will welcome and facilitate this process in all ways," Putin said.

Putin

In a joint declaration on April 1, U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev ordered negotiators to start work on a new treaty reducing their nuclear stockpiles. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Britain **Burning Brown**

AKIRA SUEMORI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

British artist Mark McGowan poses yesterday with his burning artwork made from pictures of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown in London. The work is meant to protest against Brown's staying on in power following a recent political scandal.

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Deadly attack in Iraq
A car bomb blew up yesterday in a packed outdoor market in one of the most peaceful areas of Iraq's Shiite south, killing about 30 people and wounding dozens more. The blast raised fears that militants may be planning more strikes in poorly secured areas, seeking to stretch Iraq's security services. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Guard killed in Washington Holocaust museum shooting

White supremacist gunman, 88, hospitalized after being shot

An elderly gunman, said by authorities to have a violent and virulently anti-Semitic past, stepped inside the crowded U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum yesterday, opened fire with a rifle and fatally wounded a security guard before being shot by other officers.

The assailant was hospitalized in critical condition, leaving behind a sprawling investigation by federal and local law enforcement and expressions of shock from the Israeli government and a prominent Muslim organization. Washington police Chief Cathy Lanier said the gunman was "engaged by security guards immediately after entering the door" with a rifle. "The second he stepped into the building he began firing."

Law enforcement officials said James Von Brunn, 88, a white supremacist, was under investigation in the shooting, and a second official said the elderly man's car was found near the museum and tested for explosives. They spoke on condition of anonymity, saying they were not authorized to discuss the investigation.

Museum officials identified the dead guard as Stephen T. Johns, a six-year veteran of the facility.

Von Brunn has a racist, anti-Semitic website and wrote a book titled Kill the Best Gentiles. In 1983, he was convicted of attempting to kidnap members of the Federal Reserve Board and served more than six years in prison. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

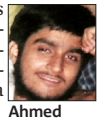
Obama: Shooting 'outrageous act'

• U.S. President Barack Obama said he is shocked by the shooting at the Holocaust museum near the White House. He called it an "outrageous act" yesterday, and said it "reminds us that we must remain vigilant against anti-Semitism and prejudice in all its forms." Obama said the shooting would not diminish the United States' effort to build a more peaceful and tolerant world. Obama says no U.S. institution is more important to those efforts than the museum.

Toronto connection to U.S. terror conviction

PLOT A U.S. federal judge convicted a former student yesterday of plotting to aid a terrorist group by videotaping landmarks around Washington, D.C.

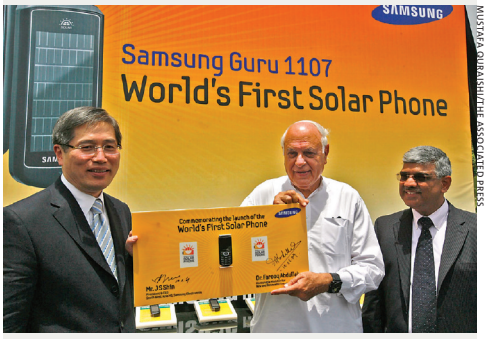
Syed Haris Ahmed, 24, was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism in the U.S. and abroad. Prosecutors based the case against Ahmed on videos that he and co-defendant Ehsanul Islam Sadequee shot of U.S. landmarks, including the Pentagon and the Capitol. They say Ahmed sought to use the videos to earn respect from overseas terrorists and attempted to connect with terrorists in Canada and Pakistan.


Ahmed

Authorities said they began building a case after Ahmed and Sadequee — both U.S. citizens — took a bus to Toronto in March 2005 and met with at least three other targets of an FBI investigation.

Authorities said they brainstormed strikes against targets that ranged from military bases to oil refineries. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Technology **Solar cellular**



MUSTAFA QURAISHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Samsung South West Asia CEO J.S. Shin, left, and Indian minister for new and renewable Energy Farooq Abdullah, middle, pose with the first solar powered Samsung mobile phone in India yesterday, where Samsung announced the global launch of the Solar Guru 1107.

News in brief

RACE Egypt's president pledged yesterday to promote development and care for the Nubians, as criticism of his government's treatment of Egypt's ancient but marginalized minority mounts. Hosni Mubarak said plans to relocate many Nubians from their traditional dwellings along the Nile River does not entail any ill will toward the population. In the 1960s, Egypt relocated hundreds of thousands of Nubians outside their historic homeland when the newly built Aswan High Dam flooded their traditional homelands.

POLITICS The president of the Dominican Republic cannot seek re-election when his term ends. A new amendment bars presidents from seeking consecutive four-year terms, though they can try for another term in the future. An assembly made up of a majority of both houses of congress approved the change late Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEST BUY CELLULAR POINT FUTURE SHOP Walmart Zellers

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Lynden Park Mall
Masonville Place
Oshawa Centre
Pen Centre
Pickering Town Centre
Scarborough Town Centre
Sherway Gardens
Square One
Stone Road Mall
Tecumseh Mall
Toronto Eaton Centre
Upper Canada Mall
Vaughan Mills
Yorkdale Mall
Westmount Shopping Centre

Teacher sues after being fired for preaching religion in class

An Ohio school teacher fired over accusations that he preached Christianity in class says in a $1-million US lawsuit that his free speech and civil rights were violated. John Freshwater, an eighth-grade teacher, also says he was harassed because of his religion. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. Mideast envoy George Mitchell arrives yesterday for a meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah.

U.S. pushes Mideast talks

The United States seeks a "prompt resumption and early conclusion" of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, Washington's special Mideast envoy said after talks yesterday with Palestinian leaders.

Former Sen. George Mitchell did not give any timetable in his prepared statement to reporters after meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

"America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity and a state of their own."
Sen. George Mitchell

However, the U.S. is engaged in an unusually public spat with Israel over its retreat from commitments to negotiate Palestinian statehood and its insistence on expanding settlements on land the Palestinians claim for that state.

"The only viable resolution to this conflict is for the aspirations of both sides to be met through two states," Mitchell said. "As President (Barack) Obama said last week, America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity and a state of their own."

In his meeting Tuesday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Mitchell sought to allay Israeli fears over the growing rift, assuring Israel that the U.S. commitment to Israeli security was "unshakable." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Pakistan builds support for offensive on Taliban

HOTEL Pakistani officials moved swiftly yesterday to use the suicide bombing of a luxury hotel in their campaign to build public support for military offensives against the Taliban, saying the country is at war.

"People are now seeing the real face of those who have been exploiting them in the name of Islam," North West Frontier Province senior minister Bashir Ahmad Bilour Bilour said.

Tuesday's attack on the Pearl Continental hotel in Peshawar killed at least nine people, a week after the Taliban threatened major attacks in large cities.

In Ottawa, a spokeswoman for the Department of Foreign Affairs said Canadian Embassy staff had checked with local officials and determined no Canadians were among the casualties.

Interviews with people on the streets of Pakistan's three largest cities — Peshawar, Karachi and Lahore — found nothing but contempt for the Taliban. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Backlash

- Past offensives against Islamist militants have resulted in backlashes as many Pakistanis concluded the only way to end the bloodshed and destruction was for the weak central government to strike a deal with the extremists — which it did this spring in the Swat Valley, only to have an emboldened Taliban violate the agreement by seizing an adjacent district.

News in brief

SPIES A U.S. federal judge ordered a former State Department employee and his wife held without bond pending a trial, saying there appeared to be insurmountable evidence that 72-year-old Walter Kendall Myers and his wife, 71-year-old Gwendolyn, spied for Cuba. U.S. Magistrate Judge John Facciola said there was a risk the pair might try to flee and Cuba, moreover, would have a powerful motivation to help them.

CHAIN REACTION As many as 50 vehicles were involved in a chain-reaction accident early yesterday in fog on a Southern California mountain highway, injuring at least 15 people and scattering wreckage for a half-mile, authorities said. The chain-reaction collision on Interstate 15 near the summit of Cajon Pass began when two tractor-trailer rigs crashed in northbound lanes, officers said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Carter to meet West Bank settler leader
Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter is planning a rare meeting with a leader of Jewish settlers in the West Bank when he visits this weekend. A statement from his Carter Center says he will see Shaul Goldstein in his West Bank home Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carla **Fur free**

VICTOR R. CAIVANO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

In a Feb. 23 letter to animal rights group PETA made public yesterday, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, told the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals she is fur free and said any pictures of her in what appears to be fur date from her modelling days, when she wasn't free to choose what she wore.

NATO forces to push into new areas

AFGHANISTAN New American troops pouring into southern Afghanistan will allow NATO-led forces to drive deeper into the heart of the Taliban insurgency, the Dutch general commanding allied forces in the region said yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Mart de Kruif said the troops would strengthen efforts to disrupt the insurgents and combat roadside bombs.

He said the addition of troops and vehicles means "we will go into areas we have never been before, disrupting the insurgents' leadership, their logistics and their IEDS" — or roadside bombs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pacific state Palau to take Uighurs

LIMBO Palau agreed to accept 17 Chinese Muslims who have languished in legal limbo at Guantanamo Bay, indicating a resolution to one of the major obstacles to closing the U.S. prison camp.

The announcement yesterday by the Pacific archipelago would clear the last of the Uighurs from the camp in Cuba — a major step toward finding new homes for detainees cleared of wrongdoing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHO chief calls key flu experts

Flu **Outbreak**

The director general of the World Health Organization has convened a meeting of the agency's emergency committee for today, a decision announced a mere 24 hours after it admitted it was very close to declaring a pandemic.

A spokesperson said Dr. Margaret Chan wants the committee's thoughts on transmission patterns in influenza A (H1N1), also known as swine flu, affected countries, information the WHO elicited in consultations yesterday with health ministries of the hardest hit countries.

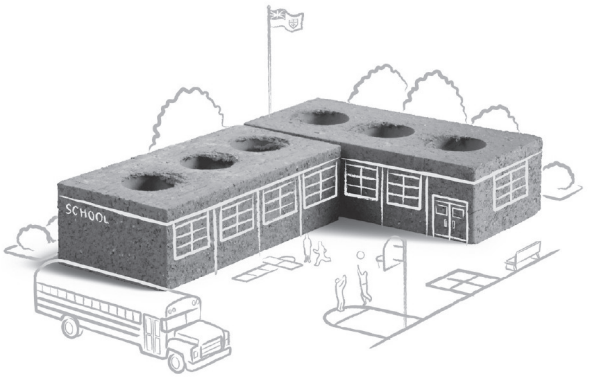
Chan does not need the emergency committee's stamp of approval to declare a pandemic; that power rests with her. But spokesman Dick Thompson said she wants to draw on their expertise.

Thompson would not name the countries that were on the teleconference, saying only it was the six or eight with the most swine flu cases. By that definition, officials from Mexico, the United States, Canada, Britain, Spain, Chile, Japan and Australia would have been on the call. THE CANADIAN PRESS

World in brief

GREECE Officials say firefighters are battling two wildfires in Greece, one outside the southern town of Nafplio and the other in a rugged forest area on the island of Evia, north of Athens. The Fire Service is using 12 airplanes and two helicopters to try to contain the first major blazes of the season. Wildfires in 2007 killed more than 70 people.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Comment & Views

EDITOR: MIKE.DEREZYCKY@METRONEWS.CA

Comment

Life too short for feuds

Relating

Now that U.S. President Barack Obama is back from his make-nice mission to the Middle East, perhaps Air Force One could drop him off in southern Ontario to tackle another intractable conflict.

One of my headaches with this column is striking the balance between drawing on personal experience and messing with my relationships by writing about them. Scientists cite the "observer effect," whereby the very act of observing a phenomenon affects the phenomenon itself. Also, there's always the risk that those chronicled will kick my ass.

And so it is with some trepidation that I refer to a nasty squabble in my family. My grandparents were, until recently, living with my aunt, my cousin and her husband. Hostilities ensued, as is not unknown in this family. Gory details spared, the upshot is the grandparents are now out of the house, with hard feelings all round.

The dispute has united the family, which is nice, but united them against the aunt, the cousin and the husband, which is less so. I went to the house with assembled rellies last weekend to retrieve Grandma and Grandpa's remaining possessions and, of course, chew over the accumulating grievances.

As with any good familial donnybrook, money plays a central role in this one. Over the course of the weekend, I also heard disagreements and contention about, among other things, humidifiers, tables, wine, grass, hairdressing and dolls.

On the web

- For more views on relating, go to Love Bytes at metronews.ca/blogs

Of course, it's really not about any of this trivia, or even the (not insignificant) money. When family fights, it's about everything. Old grudges have a way of bubbling back up, and some unspeakable things can be spoken.

Perhaps, mercifully then, neither side is currently speaking much to the other, except in increasingly legalistic emails. Instead, the two factions consult mostly amongst themselves, reinforcing and magnifying the transgressions of the others, justifying harsher and harsher sanctions.

There have also been bright spots of reasonableness, the uncle attempting to keep heads cool and stick to the issues, my sister just visiting with her pariah cousin and chatting about everything but the elephant in the family room. I got to take a road trip with my mom, see some family members I hadn't in a couple of years, read to my nephew and get the most heart-swelling hug from the little guy in return.

There are practical matters that need settling, but after that, I worry about how long the bitterness will last. My grandparents are in their 80s. There really isn't time to waste on a prolonged and pointless estrangement.

Life's too short. It was too short yesterday.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.

Views

Feminism battleground is women's bodies

FourthWave

In the wake of the unsettling shooting death of abortion provider George Tiller last week, and the release of The Purity Myth — a new book by feministing.com founder Jessica Valenti — it's clear: Today's feminism battleground is women's bodies.

In it, Valenti warns of the rise of the purity movement, which she says seeks to protect virginity — a term without medical definition, she discovers — amid a "girls gone wild" world of promiscuity. What it unintentionally does, she argues, is polarize women: "(Girls') sexuality as 'good' — worth talking about, protecting and valuing — and women's sexuality, adult sexuality, as bad and wrong."

I was floored to read about the movement's attempts to "protect" young women: Purity balls (in which daughters ceremonially pledge their purity to their fathers) or scaring them into chastity by pushing false facts through U.S. government-funded abstinence education. (Premarital sex lowers your GPA, abortions put you at risk of breast cancer, and contraception doesn't work anyway, didn't you know?)

She dives into some fraught and timely territory, highlighting abortion "informed consent" laws in the U.S. that require doctors to tell women they are "ending a human life" or show ultrasound images of the fetus to the woman. "Its purpose is to shame women into thinking that if they really knew they were getting an abortion ... they wouldn't have one," she writes.

The movement's goal is more insidious than just pushing purity, Valenti argues. Throughout the book, she shows how such practices reinforce notions that women are not responsible enough to manage their sexuality.

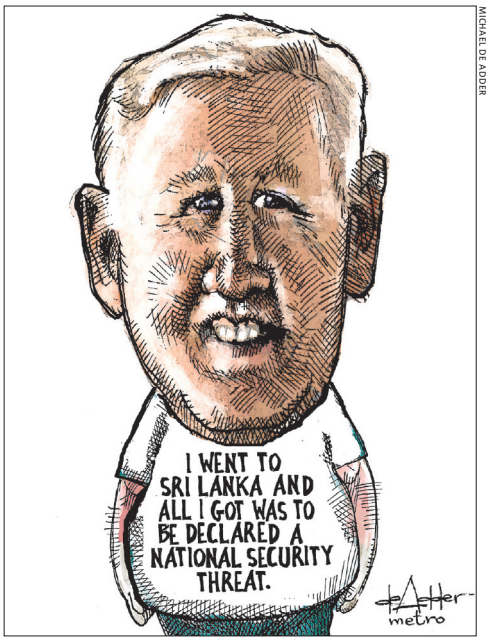
No clearer is that message than with Tiller's death. After all, there are few greater political statements than to take away the means for a woman to control her own body.

The shooting death is, in a word, unfeminist. It's not a matter of political opinion or religious belief. It's not the right of Scott Roeder, who has been charged in Tiller's death, or anyone else, to tell a woman what to do.

Tiller's family announced Tuesday it would shutter his clinic, leaving only two other providers of late-term abortions in the U.S. — a thought not lost on anti-abortion blogger Jill Stanek, who posted names and photos of these two clinics three days after his death.

Reproductive freedom — from intercourse to birth (or termination) — is under attack. Feminist battles have been fought and supposedly won, but somehow the ability for women to assert control over our own bodies diminishes still.

Canice Leung was a former editor of Ryerson University feminist magazine McClung's, copy editor at Metro, ardent feminist and loudmouth.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Game on! More than enough rhymes with hockey

Re: No rhyme nor reason (June 8)

I love Anne Hines' column and look forward to it each Monday.

But wait a minute — not enough rhymes with hockey? Game on!

Here is a poem entitled Hip Hop Hockey:

Hey I love hockey
I love the sticks the kicks the tricks
They try to block me
To box me clock me
But hey y'all I'm a Canuck
A hockey donkey kong rock me
I'm scorin' now

See, yo, him Mr. walkie-talkie hockey jockey
He gawk at me, see
He sock me talk to me
Now but don't you go mock me
Me get de goalie see
I meet he in the net I bet he set to talk now
'Bout the puck goin' down down down
Downtown oh yeah

Bunnies love me play the hockey
They talk me walk me stalk me
They shock me
I try block them with my stick don't do the trick
They say hey rocky dock me knock me
Oh oh
I be goin' to the rink now no need to think they wink wink wink
Oh man they crazy these bunnies

Oh yeah
Walk me walk me walk me walk me
Hey hockey

STEPHEN LAWSON, TORONTO

Quote of the Day

"Frankly, it probably should have happened (Tuesday). She was a little shell-shocked and, what can I say? It's never too late to do the right thing."

— KORY TENEYCKE, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER, TALKING ABOUT YESTERDAY'S APOLOGY BY NATURAL RESOURCES MINISTER LISA RAITT. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tell us your views by email to torontoletters@metronews.ca or comment on metronews.ca or on Twitter @metrotoronto

Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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Saputo dishing out new desserts menu
Canada's largest snack cake manufacturer, Saputo Inc., is preparing a new line of products, including healthier offerings and full desserts, to boost lagging sales. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Plunging exports point to country in recession

Canada unexpectedly fell back into a trade deficit with the world in April in a sharp reminder that despite recent encouraging signals of economic life, the export-oriented economy remains in a significant recession.

Statistics Canada reported the country posted a small trade shortfall of $179 million after two straight months of surpluses, including a $1-billion positive reading in March.

Given the importance of exports in Canada's economic well-being, the re-

"There's no sugar-coating this result ... this red (ink) is simply bad news."
Douglas Porter, BMO

treat does not bode well for second-quarter growth performance after a 5.4 per cent tumble in the first quarter, said Douglas Porter, deputy chief economist with BMO Capital Markets. "There's no sugar-coating this result ... this red (ink) is simply bad news," he said.

"While much of the drop in export receipts was due to a 3.2 per cent decline in prices, the volume of exports also fell significantly — and we can't blame this one on autos ... it was broad-based weakness."

Auto exports performed a rare gain in the month, although that will be wiped out in May because Chrysler shut down its plants while restructuring under bankruptcy protection. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fiat closes deal to take Chrysler's good assets

AUTOS Italy's Fiat is the new owner of most of Chrysler's assets, closing a deal yesterday that saves the troubled U.S. automaker from liquidation and places a new company in the hands of Fiat's CEO.

The deal clears the way for a new, leaner Chrysler Group to emerge from bankruptcy protection minus billions in debt, 789 underperforming dealerships and burdensome labour costs that nearly sank the automaker.

The new company will focus on smaller vehicles, areas in which Chrysler was weak.

The Italian automaker won't put any money into the deal but will give Chrysler billions of dollars worth of small car and engine technology.

Chrysler CEO Bob Nardelli bid employees farewell in an email while vice-chairman Tom LaSorda already has retired.

On Tuesday, Chrysler won its battle to erase its secured debt after the Supreme Court declined to rule on objections to the sale to Fiat from a trio of Indiana pension and construction funds. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New CEO

- Fiat CEO Sergio Marchionne immediately was named CEO of the new company, which said in a statement that it would soon reopen Chrysler factories in the United States and Canada that were idled during the bankruptcy process, costing $100 million US per day.

Bid to shake up Forzani board fails

MEETING A U.S. investment group that wanted to instill a "fresh perspective" at Canada's largest network of sporting goods stores has been thwarted at the annual meeting of Forzani Group Ltd.

New York-based Crescendo Partners had wanted its two nominees to join Forzani's board but all eight seats were filled by the nominees proposed by Forzani. Former Rona chairman Henri Drouin and Donald Gass, who retired last year as a partner from Deloitte & Touche, each received 61 per cent of the votes cast.

That was well ahead of the 38 per cent of votes cast for dissident nominee Barry Erdos, CEO of U.S. toy retailer FAO Schwarz, and 14 per cent cast for Crescendo managing director David Sgro. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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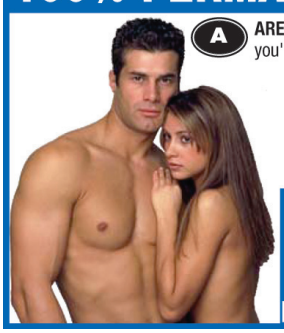

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Molson family makes bid for Habs

Three Molson brothers confirmed yesterday they have made an offer to buy the Montreal Canadiens, the Gillett Entertainment Centre and the Bell Centre. Geoff, Andrew and Justin Molson say the bid was delivered to George Gillett, who owns the Bell Centre and about 80 per cent of the National Hockey League team. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Ronaldo to visit Toronto?

It appears Toronto FC fans will be treated to one more international superstar on Aug. 7. Christiano Ronaldo, left, reportedly met with Real Madrid doctors in L.A. yesterday. The international transfer window opens July 1, at which time Ronaldo is expected to join the mega club, which will face TFC for a friendly in August. For more soccer news, check out It's Called Football at metronews.ca/blogs. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: CHRIS.CLEMENTS@METRONEWS.CA

Sports in brief

MAPLE LEAFS The Toronto Maples Leafs hired Francois Allaire yesterday to be the team's newest goaltending consultant. Maple Leafs president and general manager Brian Burke plucked Allaire from his former club, the Anaheim Ducks, where Allaire worked the past 13 seasons as goaltending consultant, which included the 2007 Stanley Cup championship team.

BLUE JAYS Free-agent outfielder David Dellucci has signed a minor league contract with the Toronto Blue Jays. Dellucci will report to triple-A Las Vegas. The 35-year-old Dellucci began his 13th major league season with Cleveland, but was released May 29.

FIRED After six seasons behind the bench in Dallas, the Stars have fired head coach Dave Tippett. Reports say the Stars have asked for permission to talk to Marc Crawford, who remains under contract to the Kings.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

'One step closer'

Balsillie seems undeterred by relocation fee

Jim Balsillie says he's "one step closer" to bringing the Phoenix Coyotes to Hamilton even though the Canadian billionaire may have to pay the NHL a hefty relocation fee to do it.

Balsillie made the statement yesterday on his website, a day after a hearing in U.S. bankruptcy court on his bid to buy the Coyotes and move them over the objections of the NHL.

On Tuesday, Judge Redfield T. Baum said he believes the NHL has the right to request a relocation fee — which could amount to $100 million US or more — and suggested he might force the league to establish a price by granting the motion to relocate the Coyotes in order to settle the bitter standoff.

Baum is considering the matter and plans to issue a ruling in the near future.

Balsillie has offered $212.5 million to purchase the Coyotes, conditional on a move to Hamilton and closing by month's end. However, Balsillie's lawyer, Susan Freeman, said her client would walk away if the relocation fee was too exorbitant. But Balsillie yesterday seemed to leave the door open.

"However it works out, the issue of a relocation fee, while a new development, does move us one step closer to bringing the Coyotes to Hamilton," the co-CEO of BlackBerry maker Research In Motion said on www.makeitseven.ca. "I am fighting for Canadian hockey fans because I know you've been out there fighting for my bid."

"I am fighting for Canadian hockey fans because I know you've been out there fighting for my bid." Jim Balsillie

Balsillie also assured fans who have supported his cause that he is still moving toward his goal.

"I am committed to continuing and winning this fight," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fenway Park **Damon goes foul**

WINSLOW TOWNSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York Yankees left-fielder Johnny Damon climbs the wall to try to get to a foul ball hit by Boston Red Sox's Kevin Youkilis during last night's game at Fenway Park in Boston. The Red Sox beat the Yankees 6-5.

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Bolt a shot in the arm

At 6-foot-5, Usain Bolt, the world's fastest man, has long coattails.

And the other athletes at tonight's Festival of Excellence are more than happy to go along for the ride.

"I think it's great," two-time world champion hurdler Perdita Felicien of Pickering said of the hype around the visit of Bolt, the Jamaican sprinter who won gold medals in the 100 metres, 200 metres and 4x100-metre relay, each in world record time, at the Beijing Olympics.

"Usain is a great athlete and I have no issues with him being in town and him getting all the attention," Felicien told a packed news conference at a downtown hotel yesterday. "Hopefully, this is the resurgence of track and field in Toronto, in Canada at large."

"It's good for the sport." Anson Henry, sprinter

While organizers have brought in Bolt in hopes of doing just that, the rest of the field is hardly made up of a bunch of no-names. More than 50 other Olympians and Paralympians will compete at the 23-event track and field meet at the University of Toronto's Varsity Centre.

While fellow competitors know who fans are paying up to $250 to see, they believe Bolt's popularity can only benefit their sport.

"The attention he's getting for how he performed at the Olympics is deserved," said Anson Henry of Pickering, who will face Bolt in the 100 metres tonight. "It's good for the sport because track and field is a beautiful sport and a lot of people are starting to recognize that now."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sports in brief

COACHING A new study indicates more work needs to be done in Canada to develop a full-time coaching fraternity for high-performance athletes. The national survey by the Coaching Association of Canada found that even at the elite level, 15 per cent of coaches are volunteers and more than half earn less than $20,000 a year from their primary coaching job. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Cup ratings rebound

Canadian hockey fans returned to their television sets to watch Game 6 of the Stanley Cup final, according to the CBC's ratings. The Tuesday night game averaged 2.596 million, a figure substantially higher than 1.612 million viewers who witnessed Game 5 — the lowest-rated game of the series thus far. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Crandell's new Green Team

LAURENCE HEINEN
for Metro Canada

Following a four-year stint with Saskatchewan's Gang Green, Marcus Crandell has joined a different type of Green Team.

Crandell suited up for the Saskatchewan Roughriders from 2005-08 before being released last August.

Although the 11-year veteran still has aspirations of playing for another Canadian Football League team, Crandell has switched his focus to his duties as vice-president of marketing and public relations with General Bio Energy.

"The guys are well aware of that and they're willing to work around whatever happens," said Crandell, who helped guide the Calgary Stampeders to a Grey Cup title in 2001. "Other guys that play in the CFL, they have other jobs as well and they work around it."

Marcus Crandell

Crandell joined the Regina-based firm last October and has been working hard to promote the launch of the company's MOPO Brand of fuels, fuel conditioners and environmentally-friendly canola-based additives and lubricants.

"It's all about word of mouth," Crandell said in regards to promoting the company that specializes in developing alternative energies and fuels. "I've been talking to everyone I know, telling them about ... what we're trying to do."

General Bio Energy president Troy Metz said Crandell will quarterback the company's "Green Team" of investor relations.

"Marcus believes in our vision and is passionate about sustainable products," Metz said. "We believe that his success on the field and leading an aggressive team will translate into success on our Green Team."

Before joining and investing in General Bio Energy, Crandell toured the company's facility and liked what he saw.

"Our whole plant from seed to tank is a green process," said the 35-year-old native of Charlotte, N.C., who resides in Regina with his wife and two sons. "That's what we're trying to promote. Everybody's looking for an environmental solution, so to speak."

Saskatchewan offensive lineman Jeremy O'Dea is also working as a director with General Bio Energy out of the Regina offence, while Calgary offensive lineman Rob Lazeo has joined the company to head up sales in Alberta and British Columbia.

"I just saw it as an opportunity to grow with the company and help them in areas where they want to grow," Crandell said.

Qualifier England romps

ALASTAIR GRANT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wayne Rooney celebrates with David Beckham yesterday after scoring one of his two goals in England's 6-0 win over Andorra in its World Cup qualifying match at Wembley Stadium.

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Metro Homes

Get rid of odours
According to Fresh Wave, most deodourizers are chalk full of chemicals. To rid your home of odours naturally, try Fresh Wave's product line available at some pharmacies or online at fresh-wave.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

The Hammer

Pg 35/36

RAFAEL BRUSSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

Metro explores the vibrant dichotomy that is the city of Hamilton. Seen here is a statue of Queen Victoria in the city's Gore Park.

Gardening

Pg 26

Canadian Gardening explores the beautiful world of baptisias.

Suite Talk

Pg 27

A new model suite lets you hit the beach, south beach that is.

Style At Home

Pg 28

Style At Home explores a new mecca of design in Woodbridge.

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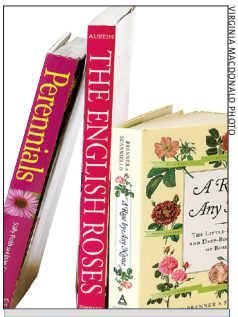

VIRGINIA MACDONALD PHOTO

Beautiful baptisias valuable additions

Both classic and new varieties of this North American native make valuable additions to the home garden.

Baptisias boast racemes of beautiful pea-like flowers in late spring and early summer, their foliage is attractive all season long and they're butterfly magnets, yet they remained relatively unknown to most Canadian gardeners until recently, perhaps because they never really caught on in Britain (125 years ago, revolutionary Victorian gardener William Robinson declared "their value is not high"). But that's all poised to change. The genus contains about 20 species, all of which are native to North America, and because wild populations interbreed with one another, interspecific hybrids are common. In addition to the widely available blue (Baptisia australis) and white (B. alba) forms, several other varieties have been used to develop a new race that has larger, more vivid flowers, and is faster to establish in home gardens.

It's fitting that much of the breeding work and plant selection has occurred in North Carolina, as blue false indigo was widely grown in Georgia and the Carolinas in the 18th century as a substitute for West Indian dyer's indigo (Indigofera tinctoria) — hence its common name, and the plentiful uncultivated populations in the region.

–WRITTEN BY STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

MULLETTE PHOTOMEDIA

Use baptisia's seed pods in dried flower arrangements or leave on the plants for hungry black-capped chickadees.

Care checklist

- All baptisias are long-lived perennials that resent being disturbed; give them a sunny site in average garden soil and leave them alone.
- Water during prolonged dry spells, until plants are well established.
- Mature specimens may be divided with a sharp, clean spade every five years in early spring.
- Baptisia species have few pest or disease problems, although discerning voles relish their roots.

Armchair gardener

Leaf through these flower books

PERENNIALS: DESIGNING, CHOOSING AND MAINTAINING EASY-CARE PLANTINGS, by Sally Roth and Jane Courtier, The Reader's Digest Associated, $36,94.
The first half of this book deals with how to design your garden using perennials and the second half is an A to Z of popular, easy-care garden plants with cultural information, and lots of good photos.

THE ENGLISH ROSES: CLASSIC FAVORITES AND NEW SELECTIONS, by David Austin, Firefly Books, $35.
It would be easy to argue that no other individual has contributed more to modern roses than breeder extraordinaire David Austin.

A ROSE BY ANY NAME : THE LITTLE -KNOWN LORE AND DEEP-ROOTED HISTORY OF ROSE NAMES, by Douglas Brenner and Stephen Scanniello, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hille, $20.95.
Anyone who has ever thumbed through a rose catalogue will love this witty, well-researched account of how roses have acquired their oft-times curious monikers. –WRITTEN BY STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

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Monarch

How to stage your own home
A well staged home can sell three times as fast and for 15 per cent more, according to Carla Woolnough, who is also there to help you stage it yourself with her new DVD series. See howtostageyourownhome.com for more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

South Beach style

Suite Talk

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

Here are some shots of Amexon Development Corporation South Beach Condos + Lofts. The Collins model is to the left and the Biltimore is above.

You don't have to go to Miami, Fla., anymore to experience South Beach.

A new complex by Amexon Development Corporation aims to bring the beach experience northbound, with South Beach Condos + Lofts, located at Park Lawn Road and Lakeshore Boulevard in Etobicoke, Ont.

"We wanted to bring that flair here to Etobicoke, with the same Art Deco concept, that Miami flair, the bright colours, the linear lines — we took a lot of those features and brought them over here," said Jason Shiff, executive sales manager for the development.

Shiff said the complex will emulate Ocean Drive in South Beach, with 16,000 sq. ft. of retail space that will sport a café, gourmet restaurant and spa, and 40,000 sq. ft. of amenities, including basketball and squash courts, a cabana-surrounded outdoor pool and a juice bar.

"We saw all the hotels and shops on Ocean Drive and wanted to do something similar here," he said. "Nothing like this has ever been done before."

To outfit its interior, Amexon recruited designer Dan Menchions and his team at the design firm he co-founded, II BY IV Design Associates Inc.

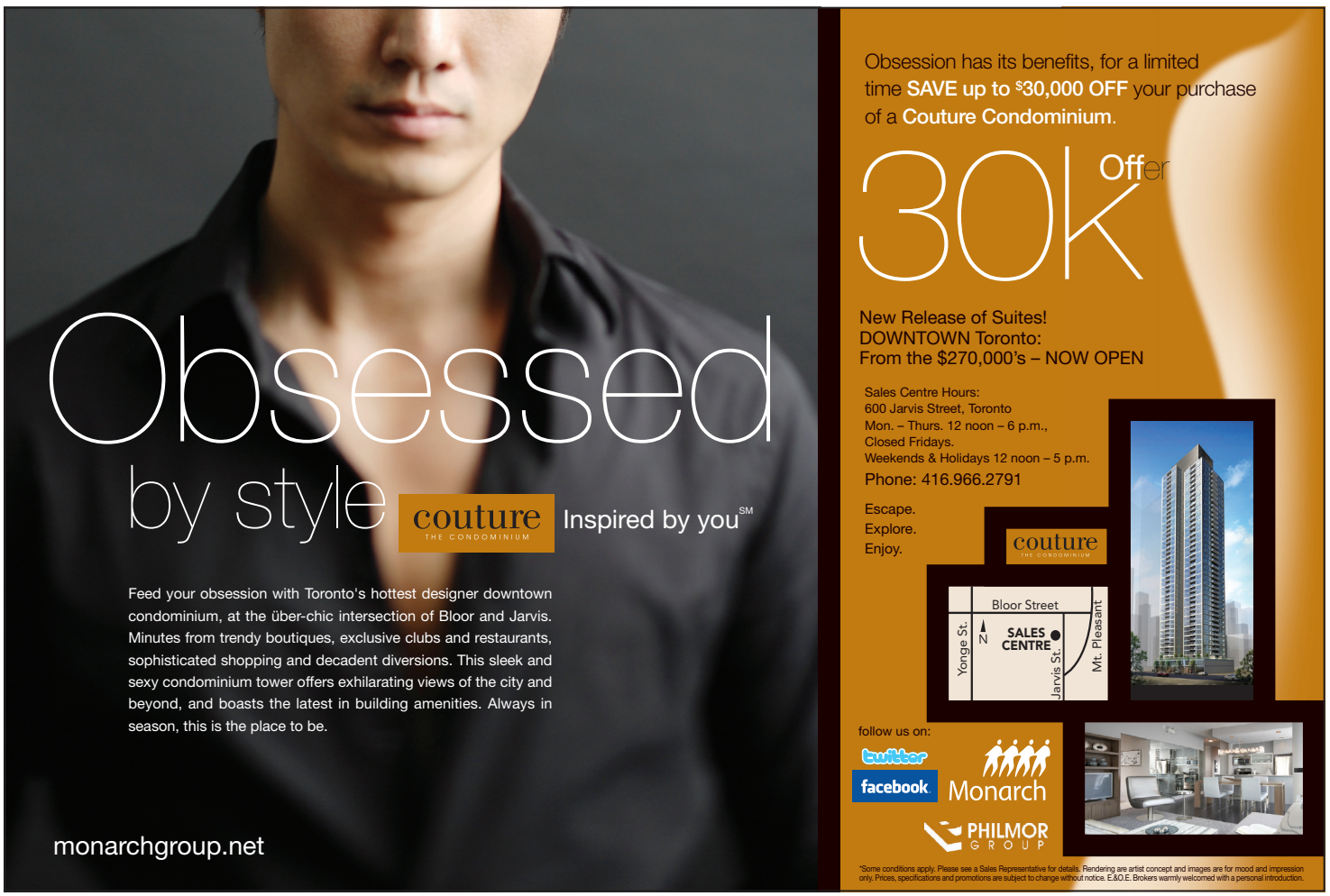
"We went down to Miami to experience nightlife, dining, entertainment, hotels, the retail avenue of it, the Deco-style buildings and the wonderful entertainment quality that South Beach has to offer," said Menchions.

The result takes shape in suites with a similar design aesthetic, but with very different colour palettes to suit a cross-section of prospective residents.

"The Biltmore is almost entry level. It's a lot more casual in its environment and more loft-like in feeling," he said of the lighter-coloured model with a heightened bookshelf to match its high ceilings. "The finishing is a lot more casual and it's a little bit more playful and youthful in its environment."

Alternatively, the Collins model contains ample blacks and golds, with distinctly geometric furniture and fixtures. "We wanted to do something a little more sophisticated and true to the Deco period, with the very high contrast in finishes," said Menchions.

Suites at South Beach Condos + Lofts range from 454 to 2,000 square feet. Prices start at $188,000 and surpass $1 million. For more information, visit southbeachtoronto.com or call 416-252-3000.



Decor
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STORE If pretty, patterned pillows tickle your fancy, they're just a mouse click away. City Home and Garden is your one-stop online shop for home decor and garden finds crafted by North American and European artisans, with a wide selection of bold and beautiful cushions produced here in Canada. E-tailer Donna Altomonte opened her website to the masses this January, and the line of zipper-enclosed cushions has been her biggest seller. Starting at $32 for square cushions (pictured), these cheap and cheerful prints are the ultimate way to update your home for summer.

–BRETT WALTHER AND LAUREN MCPHILLIPS

A mecca of design

You've gotta hand it to Woodbridge, Ont., entrepreneur Natalie Papia: Not everyone has the nerve to open a staggering 22,500 sq. ft. home interior showroom in the middle of a recession.

Then again, not everyone has the advantage of knowing a high-profile interior designer like TV makeover maven Jane Lockhart. "It's never a bad time for great design," says Jane, veteran host of the HGTV classic One House — Two Looks and current host of W Network's Colour Confidential.

Perfect pairing

The dynamic duo first met last fall when Natalie was well into planning her dream home retail destination and Jane was looking for the ideal location to launch her own furniture collection. The serendipitous meeting of minds resulted in Natalie opening Zilli Home Interiors — 50 fully accessorized "Rooms To Inspire": Vibrant vignettes of furniture, lighting and superchic accessories that were staged by Jane herself.

Crafted in Canada

The shop's design direction is decidedly global, but Natalie brings it home by scouting a great deal of the furnishings from domestic sources. "It's important that people realize you can get great furniture that's made in Canada, and it's still very reasonably priced," says Jane. The Jane Lockhart Studio on the second floor of the showroom is a gallery of her own impeccably tailored pieces — think menswear-inspired upholstery on rich, dark wood frames, and decadent deep tufting with unexpected shots of girly glam crystals.

Money tip

Bargain hunters will make a beeline for Zilli's basement. Dubbed the Z-Market (pronounced zee, as in flea), it's a slashed-price paradise of one-of-a-kind affordables.

–BRETT WALTHER AND LAUREN MCPHILLIPS

Here are some shots of the Zilli Home Interiors showroom in Woodbridge (zillihome.com). Below right: Store owner Natalie Papia, left, and designer Jane Lockhart.

ZILLI HOME INTERIORS PHOTOS

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BREAKING NEWS

TORONTO'S MOST SUCCESSFUL NEW CONDOMINIUM OPENING

TOP STORY

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It's a Buyer's Market... Don't Miss Out!

Buy Now Before This Opportunity Is Gone

In a market that has been described as uncertain, attendees at FLY's incredible Grand Opening event demonstrated confidence that well-priced suites in an exceptional location are still in high demand. Waving cheque books and waiting in-line, savvy purchasers wanted to be first to select true value suites at FLY – and with prices from just $159,900 – they weren't disappointed.

This stunning condominium community, located at 352 Front Street West between Blue Jays Way and Spadina, across from the Rogers Centre and the CN Tower, was recently re-tooled to fit the changing market. The developer, Empire Communities, studied the market carefully and concluded that right-priced, smaller suites would attract first-time buyers and investors. And so they designed 12 new floor plans – from studios to one-bedroom and one-bedroom with den layouts. The incredible prices of these suites, together with all-time low interest rates, combine to make owning a condominium at FLY a very attractive possibility. In fact one can own a condo at FLY for much less than renting!

According to Empire Executive Vice President Paul Golini Jr., "In keeping with the results of our customer research, FLY's re-designed smaller floor plans are affordable and right for today's market. We're pleased to offer a wide spectrum of suites, from studios to three-bedrooms. FLY's stunning exterior and interior features and finishes, plus exceptional building amenities remain a huge selling point."

The first three eager purchasers to buy at FLY's Grand Opening.

Wide Array Of Suites Still Available

It's a buyer's market out there . . . and this is absolutely the best time to buy a condominium at FLY. Interest rates have never been lower, prices are great with downtown condos from just $210,900. An excellent selection of suites remains from one-bedroom to three-bedroom layouts up to 1,112 sq. ft. If you are a first-time buyer, the banks have modified their "affordability index", making it even easier than ever to buy your first home. But don't wait – the suites and the opportunities won't last forever!

Striking architecture on Front St. W.

Downtown Toronto's hottest location.

Live where the action is!

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Sunny Side

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

When Marnie Warman noticed there was furniture her store's clients wanted that she couldn't find, she decided there was only one thing to do: Design it herself.

"We found out there was a need in Canada for well-made, but also very well-priced designer furniture that has just the right look and just the right style but is also exceptional quality," said the designer and owner of Burlington, Ont.'s Interior Design House, with more than 20 years design experience under her belt.

The other half of the "we" to whom she refers is Andrew Hood, an English expat designer Warman's worked with for three years since meeting him through a mutual friend. Together, they form Warman Hood; The name of the new and first line of designer furniture manufactured by Weston, Ont.-based Future Fine Furniture.

The duo designed its line with a trio of tenets in mind — all pieces must be handmade, use Canadian products and be eco-friendly. "How furniture is constructed is just as important, if not moreso, than the style," said Warman. "You want to buy a sofa that you know, in a year or two, is still going to have the same integrity, structurally, that it had the day you bought it. We mixed style with great quality with this line."

Marnie Warman and Andrew Hood's, inset, Future Fine Furniture aims bring ecologically responsible, hand-made in Canada furniture to homes everywhere.

Robert Infusino can attest to that quality. He's the co-owner of Future Fine Furniture and said the materials used in a Warman Hood piece are of higher quality than most furniture.

"It's bench-made, meaning one craftsman makes it on his own," said Infusino. "The frames are all kiln-dried Canadian maple and everything is double-dowelled, glued, screwed and corner blocked."

Once a frame is built, it's filled with BioPlush foam; an environmentally friendly filling alternative Warman said ultimately lessens greenhouse emissions.

"It reduces our dependence on petrochemicals because it's all soy-based," she said. "It's manufactured from a natural seed-based oil, like soybean, so it decreases our dependence on fossil fuels."

Placing as much emphasis on a piece's interior as its exterior is necessary, said Infusino, as he finds customers are inquiring more and more about the structure of the products they buy when they walk into furniture stores.

"Rather than buying blindly on price, they're asking where it's constructed and what it's made of," he said. "The consumer has probably become better educated because of the economic circumstances that the country is in, and feels returning back to Canadian-made goods would be a good idea for the future."

Taking the plunge and buying your first home

Buying a Home

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Metro reporter Robyn Young will be taking readers on a whirlwind tour of the trials and tribulations of buying her first home. Check back every week for her accounts.

Like the Littlest Hobo, I've been couch surfing between my parents' place in Mississauga and friends' places downtown for the last several months.

I moved back to Toronto after three years in Halifax last September and am getting myself settled with a job and reacquainting myself with the Big Smoke.

I've suffered the negative effects of the recession and recently decided it was time to take advantage of some of the positive and buy a home.

As a first time home buyer, I have the advantage of not having to sell a home before buying a new one; and as long as my friends and relatives continue to be as generous with their extra bedrooms as they have been, I have no real deadlines like a lease to worry about.

All of these factors, I've been told, will be advantageous to me when making an offer since I'll have no conditions. And now is exactly the right time to get into the market: House and condo prices are low because of the sagging economy and mortgage rates have been at an all-time low. However, there's news across the board that those low rates are on the rise — it's time to make a move.

My first step is to make an appointment with my bank account's financial advisor. Armed with all my financial information, I meet with my bank guy and we go over my credit, assets (I have none), credit rating and basic financial standing.

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE>>

All parents will hail the little 'bunkie'

HomeScape

PHOTO COURTESY OF DUROSHED

Duroshed sells basic bunkie kits for prices starting around $3,500 and upwards, plus tax and delivery in Ontario.

If you're a cottager, and you've reached that age when your children or nieces and nephews have suddenly morphed into preteens and young teens, I'm predicting that a bunkie may be in your near future.

If you've never heard of a bunkie, you're not the only one. It's a word I first heard at a friend's cottage north of Kingston, Ont. It's a small house, often with one room, that essentially serves as a place for guests to sleep when they come stay at the already overflowing family cottage.

I think it's especially handy when children grow into adult-sized people who can no longer fit handily into the pull-out couch or cot in the corner of the "family" room at the cottage. Plus, they really don't want to be housed in the same room as their parents anymore, and let's face it, the feeling is mutual.

That's why a bunkie may be just the thing to give everybody their space.

Of course you can get elaborate if you wish, but then it's really not a bunkie any more, but a guest cottage. Nothing wrong with a posh guest cottage, but the average cottager has always known that it's not really cost effective to have a large guest cottage, complete with plumbing and other amenities, because you must pay property tax on a structure that's empty part of the time. If you can make it useful for multiple purposes, such as a winter storage area that is used as a bunkie during the summer, or a boathouse with "attic" accommodations, go for it.

Or, just embrace the traditional bunkie — a small place big enough for a couple of fold-up bunkbeds, or a small sitting area with a ladder leading up to a teeny sleeping loft in the rafters.

The advantage of a small bunkie is that it can be cost effective if it is small enough not to require a building permit. Most municipalities do not require a building permit for any building below 10 square metres or 108 square feet.

If you go the bunkie route, the cheapest option is to build it yourself, if you're handy, preferably with recycled windows and doors. Another great option is to buy a bunkie or cabin kit. Check out Bolton, Ont.-based Duroshed (duroshed.com) for well-priced options. For example, Duroshed sells basic bunkie kits (12 X 9) and assembles them for prices starting around $3,500 and upwards, plus tax and delivery in Ontario.

Toronto-based Summerwood (summerwood.com) also sells very attractive bunkie kits and ships throughout Canada, and prices generally reflect the higher-end look.

It may be worth it. Just think — you'll be enjoying quiet nights at the cottage with only the distant noises of madly giggling preteens in the middle of the night.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

In the beginning, there was money

<<CONT. FROM LAST PAGE

In this meeting I discover three important pieces of information: because I don't have a 20 per cent down payment I will have to pay out an insurance premium to insure my mortgage; my living expenses shouldn't be any more than 32 per cent of my gross household income; and my total debt servicing should be no more than 40 per cent.

Including my RRSPs, which I can use for a first-time homebuyer's program, I have about a 10 per cent down payment for a condo or home between $250, 000 and $300,000. My banker guy tells me it's common for first time home buyers not to have a 20 per cent down payment.

So in addition to closing costs, moving costs, land transfer taxes, legal costs etc., I have a mortgage insurance premium to pay that will be around two per cent of the total cost of the purchase. On $300,000 this works out to be an extra $6,000. The CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) website tells me this can be rolled into my mortgage.

With my banker I discover that a mortgage of between $250,000 and $300,000 combined with my gross household income will give me a GDS (Gross Debt Service) ratio of around 32 per cent, which means my housing costs are no more than a third of my gross monthly income — exactly where I want to be.

We calculate that this price range for homes also puts me in the right spot — around 40 per cent — for my TDS (Total Debt Service) ratio, which means my total debt servicing including student loans, mortgage and any other debts, is no more than 40 per cent of my gross monthly income.

I've been advised to get a pre-approved mortgage before I start looking so I know the price range of homes I can afford and can nail down one of the low mortgage interest rates.

A couple of days go by and my financial advisor mails me a crisp, white piece of paper proving that my bank is prepared to loan me about $320,000 over 25 years at a rate of 3.85 per cent.

Scary!

My next step is to find an agent and start looking. Check back next week for more.

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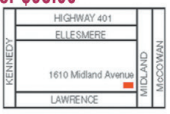

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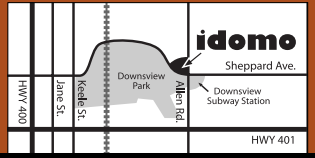

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House hunting dos and don'ts

Here are some tips from Metro's columnist on what to watch out for

There was a time when the purchase of a home was solely for living purposes. Today, however, many people are considering the investment side of it just as much, if not even more so. With the resale market picking up over the past couple of weeks it can be difficult to figure out what makes a good investment and what does not. Here're a few tips.

First off, location. The Realtor you're working with — ideally one who comes highly recommended by a trust worthy friend even after the sale — should be able to educate on the quality of your location. While the GTA is hot in general, you'd be wrong to assume that every neighborhood is on a level playing field. Location is first and foremost when it comes to addressing the resale value of the house or condo you're interested in. Influencing factors might include the quality of the neighbouring community, proximity to various items both positive and negative, and long-term community plans.

Then there is size. There are a few general rules to follow, applicable to just about all neighbourhoods in the GTA, outside of downtown Toronto (where the rules can change). If you're looking at four bedrooms, you should also go for a double garage. If you're looking at three bedrooms, you should avoid a double garage. You get what you pay for, whether it's an extra bedroom or garage space. However, demographically, if a family is considering three bedrooms they likely need only one garage space. Likewise, a family needing four bedrooms will require or at least prefer two garage spaces. There's also more than just some merit in the "worst house on the street" theory.

There are also certain rules that result from the very structure of Toronto's MLS system. If you're looking at a home that's just under 2,000 sq. ft. (say 1,965 sq. ft.) you'd do better to go for something less expensive closer to 1,700 sq. ft., or slightly more expensive to push you over the 2,000 sq. ft. mark. Two-thousand sq. ft. is a benchmark figure in the MLS searches and places you in a different bracket/psychological price range. Similar benchmarks exist for 2,500 sq. ft., 3,000 sq. ft. increasing number of bathrooms, a separate entrance, segregated family room, and of course a finished basement.

"In terms of paying extra for your resale home based on upgrades, there are two main areas where the value in the upgrades can be recaptured best, thus worth most: Kitchen and bathrooms. ... the kitchen (in terms of class) and bathrooms (in terms of cleanliness)."

Resale. In terms of paying extra for your resale home based on upgrades, there are two main areas where the value in the upgrades can be recaptured best, thus worth most: Kitchen and bathrooms. In all honesty, when a family purchases a home it is, more often than not, the lady of the house who makes the final decision — and the kitchen (in terms of class) and bathrooms (in terms of cleanliness) are what catch her eye! Granite counter tops, marble flooring, expensive showers, upgraded cabinetry all attract a good return on your investment. Having said that, you do not want to blow a large wad of cash on upgrades just for the sake of selling. It's important to discuss such things with your real estate professional.

When looking for a home, there are good things to pay for and bad things. These are only a few of the general rules! For more information feel free to contact me at amitp@rogers.com. Every home is built with wood, bricks, cement and drywall, but what's contained within those walls, and the community outside, determines a good purchase from a great one. Happy Hunting!

Amit is a Realtor/Developer with Re/Max. amitp@rogers.com

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A suicide and an elderly buyer

LegalMatters

Jeffrey D. Cowan
jeff@cowanlaw.ca

Q I am an elderly reader of your column and have come across a very disturbing situation with a condo that I was scheduled to purchase this month. I had signed what I thought was a perfectly good Agreement of Purchase and Sale to buy a moderately priced ground floor condo which I had planned on living in until such time as I needed assisted living or passed beyond that need. I now understand that the vendor has died by suicide, left a will in Quebec where she was living and the transaction is tied up because the notary in Quebec has advised that nothing can be done to with the property until they get matters straightened out.

A I usually say to my readers that I encounter this issue quite frequently but I can't in this instance.

The first issue you have is that the situation is very complex. I assume that the notary has some issue with the actual will. If someone is suicidal there is a screaming question as the mental capability of the person to compose a will (it was handwritten). The notary is stating that nothing should be done with the property because it has not been determined who has the capacity to deal with the property. Normally, the executor can deal with property once appointed as the estate executor. However, this process is in question and usually takes at least a couple of months.

Our faithful writer then thought that perhaps she could rent the unit while they get legal matters straightened out. The problem there is again, who has the ability to sign a binding lease for our elderly client. The last thing one would want is for her to move in and then six months later when the dust settles to find herself without a proper lease and no rights with respect to the property.

The reality of the situation is that we would advise our client to look for alternate accommodations and perhaps something will clarify in the near future and we can rectify the offer and get her into the condo unit. Time will tell.

Jeffrey Cowan is the principal with Cowan Taylor and McGee, Barristers & Solicitors. The information in this article should not be relied upon as legal advice.

Sister city
Hamilton is a sister city with Flint, Mich. Flint and Hamilton hold the distinction of having the oldest continuous sister-city relationship between a U.S. and Canadian city, since 1957. WIKIPEDIA.COM

Living In Hamilton and Burlington

The Hammer welcomes you

Micro-metropolis Hamilton often referred to as a 'big, small city'

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

ALL PHOTOS BY RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

Dundurn Castle, built in 1832 by Allan Napier MacNab, prime minister from 1854-56, above. Below, a Niagara Escarpment sign atop Hamilton Mountain.

Like two halves of a vibrant dichotomy, opposites attract in Hamilton.

Towering, green trees mingle with office towers while sixth-generation Canadians share a coffee and some laughs with newly arrived residents from far-off lands. The new gives nod to the old as art-deco buildings stand watch while GPS-guided busses stop just outside their doors. Tranquil, hillside retreats look down on a bustling city in transformation that continually seems to challenge the status quo. Defying expectations is what Hamilton does best.

Affectionately referred to as "The Hammer" by its residents and nicknamed "Steeltown" by outsiders for its legacy of steel and manufacturing industries, the city of Hamilton is a micro-metropolis offering the fixings of a bigger city with the setting and laid-back attitude befitting a more peaceful refuge.

Split right through its middle by the majestic Niagara Escarpment, the city benefits from two completely different personalities melded together — one, a relaxing community of hillside mansions and cosy houses far more comfortable and charming than one should be able to afford for the money; the other, a fast-paced metropolitan core comprising Canada's ninth-largest city.

"We really have a unique geography with the escarpment that divides the city. Some days in winter it snows at the top of the escarpment while it rains down below," said Neil Everson, Hamilton's director of economic development and real estate.

In day-to-day matters, Hamilton is like a microcosm of much larger, louder cities.

"A lot of people refer to us as a 'big, small city'," Everson said.

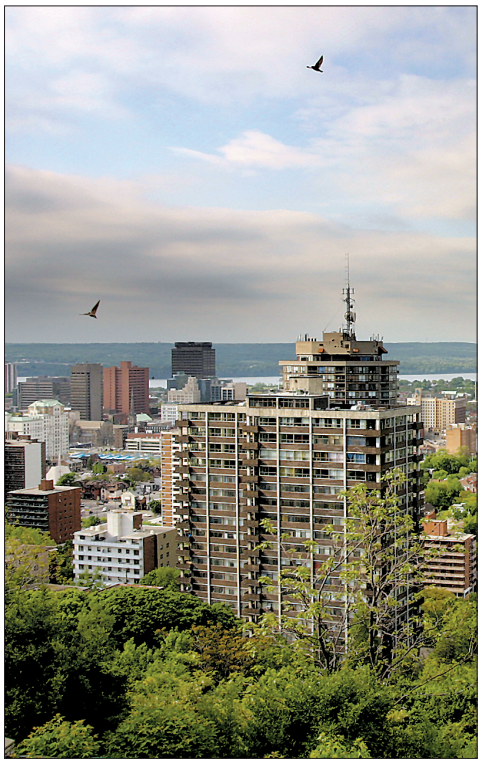
A plentiful variety of restaurants offering world, exotic fare provides the same gastronomic opportunities as gourmand-friendly metropolises like Toronto and Montreal. The hopping bars and nightclubs of Hess Village heat up Lower Hamilton with plenty of possibilities for good-natured mayhem. The hockey-loving city may soon even get its own NHL franchise if legal wrangles get resolved to transplant the ailing Phoenix Coyotes team to the city.

According to Everson, two-thirds of new homes sold in Hamilton are being snatched up by Torontonians looking for more comfort and quiet than they could afford for the same price in Toronto. Offering affordable housing with less than an hour of commuting time to Toronto proper with a full schedule of GO Train service to Toronto starting in 2012, it's no surprise life in Hamilton has been enticing residents from across the GTA. CONT. ON NEXT PAGE>>

Best of The Hammer

Where to go, what to do

- Best place to feed the birds: Gore Park, at the heart of the city's downtown core;
- Best make-out spot: Sam Lawrence Park, overlooking a breathtaking view of the city. Park your car and enjoy the view before locking lips;
- Best place for a walk: Bruce Trail, a long network of walking trails that snake through some of Hamilton's greenest areas;
- Best coffee joint: The Bad Dog Cafe — cosy and friendly, with coffee that has bite;
- Best sports bar: Frisco's Eatery and Sports Bar — dip into their first-class wings;
- Best street: Lower James Street, with its bushy, healthy trees flanking motorists and pedestrians alike as it spears its way across the city, from the waterfront to the escarpment. Great shopping, too.



A view of Hamilton from atop the mountain, left. Copps Coliseum a sports and entertainment venue — and the possible future home of the ailing NHL Phoenix Coyotes franchise — centre. A graffiti wall in downtown Hamilton — the city has been recognized as a bastion for artists, because of its cheaper studio real estate prices compared to Toronto.

Go McMaster
McMaster University moved to the city in 1930 and today has over 22,000 enrolled students, of whom almost two-thirds come from outside the immediate Hamilton region. WIKIPEDIA.COM

About as multicultural as cities get

>> CONT. FROM LAST PAGE

For resident Katelyn Brown, 21, who has lived her whole life in the city, Hamilton is a hub where disparate things converge.

"There's different cultures here, different everything. It's a midpoint for a lot of things," Brown said.

Hamilton's cultural diversity often surprises people accustomed to thinking of the city as a homogenous, blue-collar town. According to the 2006 Canadian Census, more than one-fifth of the city's current population was born outside of Canada, making Hamilton the third-most diverse city in Canada behind Toronto and Vancouver.

Fred Eisenberger, mayor of Hamilton, says the city's multi-cultural population shows people recognize the myriad of possibilities life in Hamilton offers.

"I think people see Hamilton as a place of great opportunity and a place that has really embraced diversity," Eisenberger said.

If the current multi-culturalism of Steeltown is any surprise, the plentiful parks and green spaces around the city might come as an outright shock to uninitiated observers expecting a utilitarian landscape of sprawling asphalt and looming metal spires in what was once Canada's manufacturing capital.

"We have a vast array of green spaces and open areas — it's all towards enhancing the beauty of the city. For me, the green setting is what I love most about Hamilton," Hamilton mayor Fred Eisenberger, said.

• Be sure to check back next week when Metro Homes takes you on a tour of life in Burlington

RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA
A fountain in Gore Park, one of Hamilton's many green spaces.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

BURLINGTON – Paradise of the GTA

Affordability and lifestyle rank city 4th among "Best Places To Live In Canada"

Looking for a hidden paradise? Try Burlington. That's how MoneySense Magazine introduced the city in its survey, Canada's Best Places to Live 2009. After a study based on 154 cities, the magazine ranked Burlington as the fourth best place to live in Canada.

Placing among the top five Canadian cities is no small feat. The magazine based its findings on 24 factors including; prosperity, growth, affordable housing, job opportunities, weather, cultural activities, health care, whether people could walk or bike to work, and low crime rate. Locally the results rank the city as the best place to live in the greater GTA, suggesting a quality of life superior to Mississauga, Oakville and Toronto.

Burlington is a waterfront city home to more than 170,000 people. From its attractive downtown to its hip uptown core, Burlington is a vibrant growing community.

Burlington's geography includes some of the country's highest household incomes and most affordable housing options ranging from town homes, lofts and condominiums.

"After a study based on154 cities, the magazine ranked Burlington as the fourth best place to live in Canada."
MoneySense magazine

Burlington offers the most affordable condo living west of Toronto. Among new options, the Strata condominium in downtown Burlington offers magnificent views of Lake Ontario, and is one of Burlington's first residential buildings to apply for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification. Times Square is an exciting vibrant mid-rise condominium residence featuring 90 thoughtful suite designs located in the convenient Orchard Community near Bronte Provincial Park. Ironstone Condominiums is a fusion of design and sustainability that brings an urban sensibility to Burlington's new uptown core, and will be one of the first condominiums to operate from geothermal energy.

The city offers a vibrant cultural life, award-winning restaurants and fantastic shopping, local festivals and an inviting waterfront. For outdoor lovers, the Bruce Trail is minutes away and local farms offer fresh produce in season. There is even a sailing club nestled into the bay.

Burlington's location in the heart of the Golden Horseshoe is good for its economy and wide range of employment opportunities.

With easy access to Hamilton, Toronto and the U.S. border, Burlington is the crossroads of Southern Ontario's industry and commerce. Trend setting businesses may already have figured out what home buyers are now recognizing. Mountain Equipment Co-Op recently opened a Burlington location, Holt Renfrew has a new store that is currently under construction. Celebrity chef Roger Mooking, Food Network host and mastermind behind several Toronto culinary destinations, will also be launching his newest restaurant in Burlington later this summer. What does Burlington's "best place to live" status mean to homebuyers? With great living options including new condominiums, its value and affordability, and above average quality of life, Burlington may be the hidden paradise you've overlooked.

Holt Renfrew has a new store and celebrity chef Roger Mooking, Food Network host and mastermind behind several Toronto culinary destinations will also be launching his newest restaurant in Burlington this summer.

Ironstone condominiums will be one of the first to operate from geothermal energy.

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10 REASONS TO LOVE BURLINGTON

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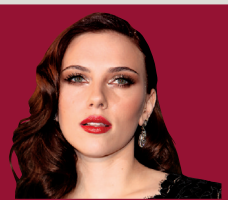
Style



The new face of Mango

American actress Scarlett Johansson is the new face of Spanish fashion brand Mango for its fall/winter 09 campaign. The 24-year-old Lost In Translation star was chosen for her elegant, yet fun-loving and youthful personality. Johansson is taking over from her predecessor, Penélope Cruz, who has been the image of the brand for the last four seasons.
METRO NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Fashion goes exploring

African-inspired summer collections

The African aesthetic is hot this summer. The continent's tribal beat is pulsating through fashion, accessories and even makeup trends.

Fashion designers including Junya Watanabe created African-inspired collections by referencing the continent's exotic motifs in boldly printed dresses worn with mile-high wrapped headdresses.

At Louis Vuitton, designer Marc Jacobs presented Josephine Baker-style feathered skirts along with colourful jewelled stilettos and necklaces in a jubilant tribal motif — python, beads and wooden pearls. And at Dior, John Galliano designed stilettos with fertility symbols etched into high heels. Exotic animal prints at Lanvin.

This preoccupation with African themes has been mined before, most glamorously by Yves Saint Laurent in the '60s and '70s. His African collection for summer 1967, for example, included the famous Bambara dresses constructed of raffia and flax with wood- and glass-beaded embroidery.

International Herald Tribune fashion editor Suzy Menkes recently explored our culture's long fascination with what used to be called the Dark Continent — "in art, in Picasso's African period at the birth of Cubism; in entertainment, when Josephine Baker appeared in a Paris revue in 1925 wearing not much more than a skirt made of fake bananas; in fashion, when Cecil Beaton photographed the fragile arms of Nancy Cunard engulfed in ivory bangles in 1929."

Toronto, Ont. jeweller Dandi Maestre recently unveiled her spring/summer line of accessories — a primitive, tribal collection right out of Africa.

"I think of it as more aboriginal than specifically African," she says.

"There is something very raw about these pieces that may not even fit with fashion."

But her creations obviously do. Bracelets constructed with pieces of bone, ancient raw amber, seeds, pony hair, shed moose antlers, shells and reclaimed wood provide a powerful, natural statement.

The trend is also being expressed in seasonal makeup lines from companies like YSL Beauté and MAC. Both brands are capitalizing on the currency of Africa, the intense light and the spicy colour palette associated with the continent.

Called Treasures of Africa, the YSL 2009 summer look draws on "the richness, rhythm and poetry of Africa" — the power of the sun combined with intense colours.

Recently, MAC launched a summer collection of makeup called Style Warrior with a "deliberately diverse colour story" exotically packaged in stylized zebra and leopard prints.

MAC creative director James Gager believes that, as more men and women take responsibility for developing their own style, it makes sense to take inspiration from cultures that "decorated themselves as a form of expression. The cookie-cutter mode of beauty is long past."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MAC's Style Warrior collection is now on sale

MAC's Style Warrior summer collection includes: Style warrior lipgloss, left, (blackened bronze brown), $16.50; and tribalist lipstick (creamy blackened berry), $16.50.

CHRISTOPHE ENA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Left: Japanese designer Junya Watanabe's spring-summer 2009 collection showcased this summer's African aesthetic trend with boldly printed dresses and wrapped headdresses.

Home jewelry parties

TREND Lia Sophia has been spotted draped around the necks and hanging on the arms of Katy Perry, Tyra Banks, Eva Longoria Parker and Sheane Grimes, as well as in the pages of Marie Claire, People Magazine and Teen Vogue.

No, Lia Sophia isn't the latest Hollywood starlet living in the fast lane. There is definitely a party element, though — Lia Sophia is an increasingly popular jewelry line available through hostesses or advisers and home jewelry parties. Yes, much like Tupperware. But shinier, and way more versatile when it comes to your wardrobe.

Lia Sophia jewelry ranges from everyday pretty that start at less than $20 to red-carpet statement pieces that range from just over $110 to $1,650. The extensive line of necklaces, earrings, rings, bracelets, bangles and cuffs includes glass and resin beads, vintage-inspired gold and silver, hammered metals, bold, modern pieces, and art-deco inspired designs.

Updates to the catalogue collection happen twice yearly; several Red Carpet collections come out every year. And everything comes with a lifetime guarantee.

Lia Sophia Meadow Genuine River Shell necklace, $42.

Available until recently only in the US, Lia Sophia has expanded its network to Canada. Advisers can start up with $165 for training materials, catalogues and merchandise samples, and have access to additional support and training, but they don't have to buy their own inventory. They also are the only sales outlet for the jewelry; the company sells exclusively through their representatives. For more information, visit liasophia.ca.

JANINE FALCON/
FOR METRO CANADA

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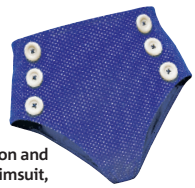
RUNWAY HITS

Make the season's hottest looks work for you!

RETRO

Resin sunglasses ($12, at Aldo Acccessories)

Suede and wood platform sandals, Pierre Hardy for Gap ($118, at Gap)



Two-piece nylon and spandex swimsuit, H&M ($34, hm.com)

SAFARI

Cotton tunic, BZR ($195, agencemelani emclean.com)

Leather sandals, MICHAEL Michael Kors ($168, 1-866-733-5677)

Snake-print leather knapsack, High Fashion Handbags ($138, highfashionhandbags @bellent.ca)

Editors' Pick

TROPICAL PUNCH

Summer lovin'
Beach babes are made in the shade with these Harlow sunglasses ($35, Kensie).

To read these stories and more, visit: **ellecanada.com**

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Food

Strawberries pack a wallop of healthy nutrients and with only 56 fat-free calories per cup. They provide folate, fibre, magnesium and potassium as well as antioxidants.

BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA

High C
Strawberries are high in Vitamin C — just 1 cup (250 ml) meets your daily needs.

EDITOR: NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

Strawberry fields forever

Don't believe The Beatles — local strawberries won't be around for long

À la carte

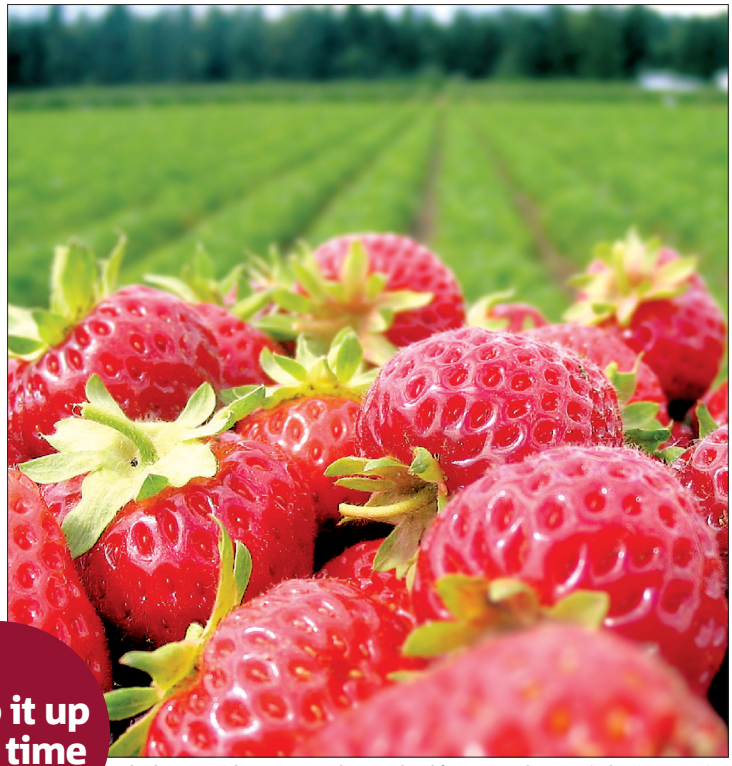
Barb Holland
metronews.ca/alacarte

Homegrown strawberries are so worth the long wait. While the season always seems so short — usually a four week window from mid-June into late July (depending on weather of course) — some growers are planting "day-neutral" strawberries, which ripen from mid-July to mid-October, with heaviest production in August and September. It is a small percentage but it's still tasty news.

Whether you pick your own or buy at a local farm or market, now's the time to enjoy ripe, sweet and juicy handpicked strawberries.

This recipe, from Food Matters, A Guide to Conscious Eating by Mark Bittman (Simon & Schuster), is indeed simple. No need for an ice cream maker, just a food processor and a few ingredients.

It calls for frozen fruit, so once you've had your fill of fresh strawberries, freeze some until solid. It'll take about one hour or so, then whirl this together in no time at all. And try it with other berries and fruit as the season progresses.



Whether you pick your own or buy at a local farm or market, now's the time to enjoy ripe and juicy fresh strawberries.

Whip it up in no time

Super-Simple Sorbet

From author and New York Times columnist Mark Bittman's latest book, Food Matters, A Guide to Conscious Eating, here is an easy and healthy recipe from a book that is a worthy read. I've only made this with plain yogurt and it works well. Makes about three cups (750 ml).

INGREDIENTS:
- 1 lb (500 g) frozen strawberries or other seasonal fruit
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) plain yogurt, crème fraiche, or silken tofu
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) sugar, more or less
- As much water as needed

METHOD:
Place strawberries, yogurt and sugar in food processor, and process until puréed and creamy, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. If the fruit doesn't break down completely, gradually add some water through the feed tube a tablespoon or two at a time, being careful not to overprocess the sorbet into liquid.

Serve immediately or freeze. To serve later, allow 10 to 15 minutes for the sorbet to soften at room temperature.

TIPS:
- If your food processor is not a large volume one, try half the recipe (or divide and make two batches).

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

Food in **brief**

LOCAL Strawberries don't ripen after they've been picked, so buying local ensures berries are at the peak of freshness. Berries are some of the most perishable fruit and are truly at their finest eaten as soon as picked as possible. Choose fruits that are plump and already brightly coloured. Strawberries should be shiny red and have their calyxes (the green cap that joins the berries to the stems) attached. A vivid green, unwilted calyx is a good indicator of a fresh strawberry.

STORING Strawberries are delicate, but will last a few days in the refrigerator in well-ventilated cartons or in a single layer on a paper towel-lined shallow pan. Refrigerate berries, but don't wash until you are ready to use. Then rinse gently and drain on paper towels. Remove the hulls after rinsing.

FREEZING To freeze berries whole, rinse lightly, dry well and hull. Arrange in a single layer and freeze until firm, then pack in plastic bags or containers. To freeze with sugar, sprinkle sugar over sliced strawberries – ¾ cup (175 ml) sugar per 4 cups (1 L) sliced strawberries. Mix well before packing into containers.

BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA

On the web

New blogger:
- Travel along with Diane Thompson's culinary adventures in her Global Peasant blog. Visit metronews.ca/globalpeasant for her musings on a raw food diet challenge and a recipe for Rum Balls.

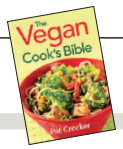
Local **Savour**

Jerusalem Restaurant
955 Eglinton Ave. W. (near Bathurst Street)
416-800-2995
Combination Dinner for Two, $36

What strikes you first in the petite lobby of this warmly decorated Middle Eastern restaurant are the framed awards and signed letters of thanks on the walls. Mila Mulroney? Really?

The best pick for first-time diners at Jerusalem would be the Combination Dinner for Two: It takes a tour around the basic traditional dishes of Middle Eastern fare and, while there are no surprises, every portion in itself is an immaculate affair. For $36, you get three skewers of a meat of your choice, baba ghanouje, hummos, falafel, tabbouleh salad, pickles, fried eggplant or sauteed tomatoes, rice, salad and pita bread. The platter for two easily stuffed three of us — bringing the dining bill for three adults to less than $50. Authentic and seemingly effortless cuisine isn't always so affordable.

Service is on the cool side but prompt enough. Casual clothing is acceptable as well.



Detailed guide on vegan eating

The Vegan Cook's Bible (Robert Rose) by Pat Crocker explains good health guidelines and features charts on foods that protect the digestive system, immune, nervous and respiratory systems. She also includes an encyclopedia of fruits, vegetables, soy, grains, herbs and ingredients. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian Living magazine is on sale now!

Canadian Living recipe of the month

Seafood Caesar Salad

online

For more Tested-Till-Perfect recipes, visit canadianliving.com

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pkg (340 g) large raw shrimp
- 2 whole squid, cleaneD
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) each lemon juice and extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) each dried Italian herb seasoning and pepper
- 1 head romaine lettuce, torn
- 2 cups (500 ml) croutons

Dressing:

- 3 tbsp (45 ml) grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp (25 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) each Dijon mustard and anchovy paste
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Pinch each salt and pepper
- Dash Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp (25 ml) light mayonnaise

METHOD:

Toss together shrimp, squid, lemon juice, oil, Italian seasoning and pepper. Place on greased grill over medium heat; close lid and grill, turning once, until shrimp are pink and squid is opaque, about 4 minutes. Slice squid into rings; set aside.

DRESSING: Meanwhile, in large bowl, whisk together cheese, oil, lemon juice, mustard, anchovy paste, garlic, salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce; whisk in mayonnaise.

Add lettuce and croutons; toss to coat. Top with shrimp and squid.

For more great recipes, visit metronews.ca.

The real burger king

A filling of tangy Canadian Feta cheese adds a burst of flavour to the humble burger, while fresh creamy yogurt tzatziki balances the saltiness of feta, olives and sun-dried tomatoes. Serve with grilled buttered corn on the cob and a green bean salad for the perfect summer feast.

Consider these burgers for Father's Day, coming up June 21.

Mediterranean Style Burgers with Canadian Feta and Radish and Cucumber Tzatziki

This recipe comes courtesy of the Dairy Farmers of Canada. You can access many more recipes online at dairygoodness.ca or clip this one for Father's Day — coming up June 21. This recipe makes four burgers and 1-½ cups (375 ml) Radish and Cucumber Tzatziki.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (250 ml) yogurt cheese (see cooking tip)
- ½ cup (125 ml), shredded English cucumber, well drained
- ½ cup (125 ml) shredded radish
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- ½ tsp (2 ml) each, salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 lb (500 g) lean ground beef
- ½ cup (125 ml) dried breadcrumbs
- ½ cup (125 ml) finely chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- ¼ cup (50 ml) finely chopped Kalamata olives
- 1 egg
- ½ cup crumbled Canadian Feta cheese (about 2 oz/60 g)
- 4 small whole wheat pitas or thin style hamburger buns
- ½ cup (125 ml) chopped tomatoes
- 4 lettuce leaves

METHOD:

Radish and Cucumber Tzatziki:

In small bowl, combine yogurt cheese, cucumber, radish, garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic; refrigerate (can be prepared up to two days ahead.)

Burgers:

In large bowl, gently combine beef, bread crumbs, sun-dried tomatoes, olives, and egg. Shape ½ of the beef mixture into four square-shaped patties; make an indentation in the centre of each square; fill each indentation with approximately 2 tbsp (30 ml) crumbled Canadian Feta cheese. Make 4 squares with remaining beef mixture; press one square on top of each Feta filled patty; press to seal in the Canadian Feta cheese filling.

Preheat barbecue to medium-high. Place burgers on greased grill; close lid and grill, turning once, for about 5 to 6 min per side or until digital thermometer inserted sideways into centre reads 160° F (71° C).

Place patties into pita bread pockets; top with Radish and Cucumber Tzatziki, chopped tomato and lettuce.

Cooking Tips:

- For yogurt cheese, spoon 2 cups (500 ml) 3% plain yogurt into a paper towel — or fine cheesecloth-lined sieve and set over a bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour (the longer it stands, the thicker it becomes.) Discard the liquid (whey) in the bowl.
- Use additional Radish and Cucumber Tzatziki as a dip or as a spread for sandwiches.

Variation:

Add ½ tsp (2 ml) dried oregano to Canadian Feta cheese before stuffing burgers.

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

metronews.ca/liquidassets

Summer blush

With summer just around the corner a wine fan's thoughts turn to refreshing juice and drinking al fresco. I'm partial to a nicely chilled rosé.

Unfortunately I'm in the minority because in North America, a bottle of blush wine is the liquid equivalent of Rodney Dangerfield: It just can't get no respect.

A lot of the blame can be borne by the winemakers of old who put together their rosés with little thought and even less flavour. When white zinfandel became popular in the '70s, its slightly sweet personality was the toast of the town with the cooler crowd though it still couldn't get arrested at a traditional wine tasting.

And then there's **Portugal's Mateus ($8.95 - $10.99)**. For those of you who just rolled your eyes — give it a rest. I bet you haven't tried it since you emptied a bottle to use as a candle holder back in college. Its light spritz and relaxed flavour of orange zest, plum and dry raisin is still quite charming and worth revisiting.

The selection of rosés across the country is extensive with lots of new, interesting wines hitting store shelves this month. Open your mind and mouth and give a few a try.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.